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# THE SKY'S the LIMIT

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- ★ No. 61 **DEATH TRAP**  
*Like a monstrous god of war, Hill 60 demanded a sacrifice!*
- ★ No. 62 **NIGHT OF THE DEVIL**  
*The fate of the lonely patrol was hidden in the nightmare jungle!*
- ★ No. 63 **CHALLENGE**  
*The war was too far away for these red-blooded men of action!*
- ★ No. 64 **THE VICIOUS CIRCLE**  
*Clawed from the sky, they would not admit defeat!*

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The fate of the lonely patrol was hidden in the nightmare jungle!

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**NIGHT OF THE DEVIL**

# THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

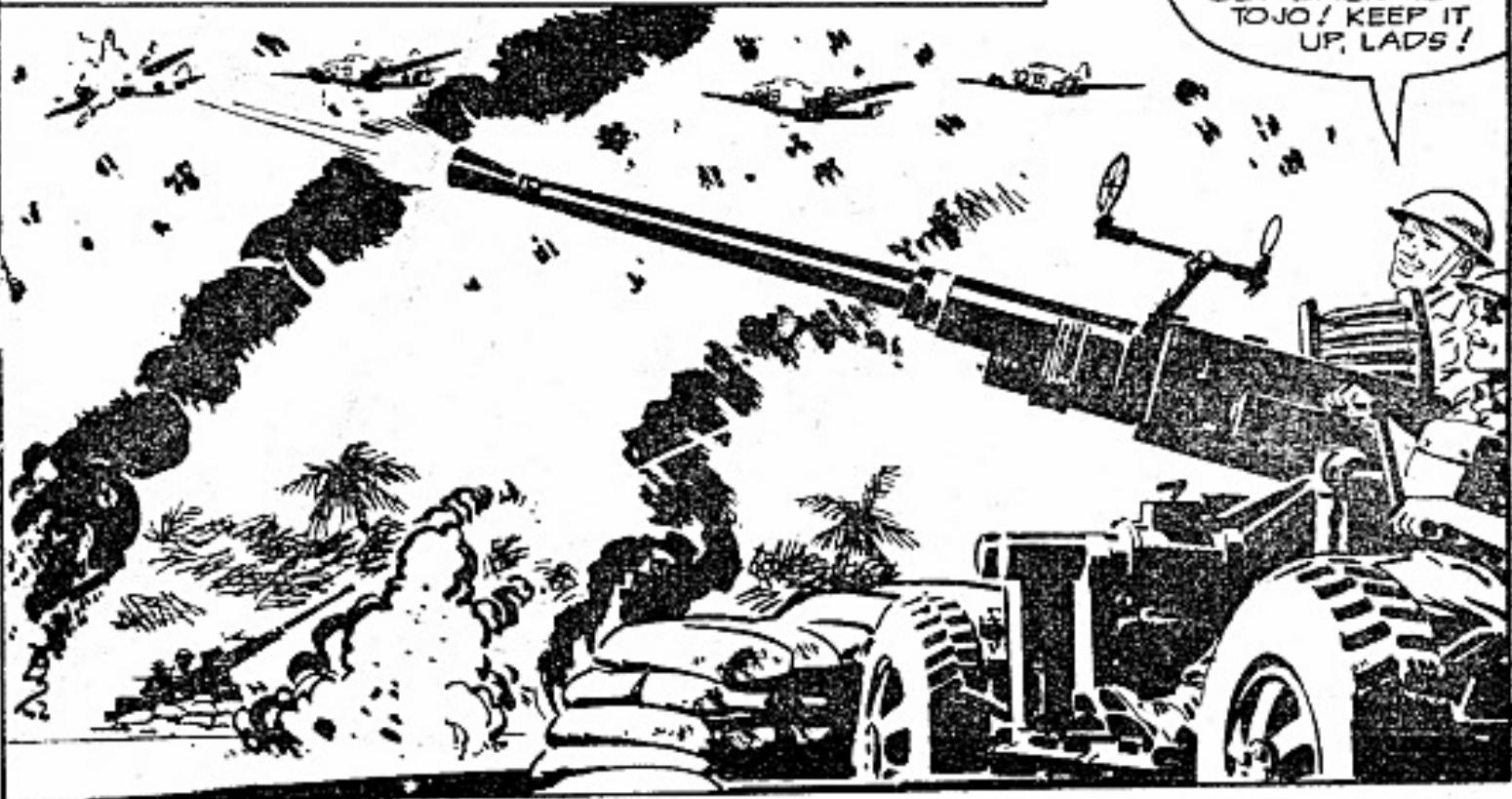


BURMA, 1942. THE JAPS WERE TRYING TO WIN THE BATTLE FOR THE EASTERN SKIES WITH THEIR DEADLY ZERO FIGHTERS. MATCHED AGAINST THEM WAS A SOAKED DEPLETED FIGHTING FORCE OF HURRICANE PLEDGED TO STEM THE ENEMY MIGHT...

# Chapter 1. The Flying Tigers

ON THE BATTERED AIRFIELD OF MINGALA, ENEMY BOMBERS ONCE MORE AIMED A VICIOUS ATTACK, SWEEPING IN AT LOW LEVEL TO HAMMER THE STRICKEN AIRSTRIP IN OPEN DAYLIGHT...

THERE'S ONE THAT WON'T GET BACK TO TOJO! KEEP IT UP, LADS!



THE WEEKS OF CONTINUAL ACTION WERE TELLING ON THE EXHAUSTED PILOTS WHO LIMPED HOME TO BASE. IN A SHELTER BY THE AIRSTRIP, WING COMMANDER BRYANT D.F.C., SPOKE TO THE SOLE REMAINING STATION OFFICER...

ALL OUR ACK-ACK SITES WERE KNOCKED OUT IN THAT LAST RAID, DOC. WE CAN'T LAST MUCH LONGER!

CHEER UP, OLD MAN, SURELY THIS IS WHAT YOU CAME OUT TO BURMA FOR— TO GIVE THE JAPS SOME OF THEIR OWN MEDICINE?



WING COMMANDER BRYANT TURNED AWAY AT THE WORDS. HIS THOUGHTS ROLLED BACK TO A SIMILAR NIGHT, TWO YEARS BEFORE— WHEN THE ENEMY HAD NOT BEEN A SNARLING ZERO FIGHTER...

I'LL NEVER FORGET WHY I APPLIED FOR THIS POSTING...



TWO YEARS BEFORE, FLIGHT LIEUTENANT BRYANT HAD BEEN A NIGHT-FIGHTER PILOT, FLYING BEAUFIGHTERS FROM AN AIRFIELD IN SOUTHERN ENGLAND...

ACHTUNG!  
ENEMY  
FIGHTER!

WE GOT  
HIM, BRYANT!  
THAT'S OUR  
EIGHTEENTH  
IN ALL!

THE BEAUFIGHTER HEADED FOR BASE AGAIN AS JOHNNY LEVIS, BRYANT'S GUNNER, CONGRATULATED HIM. THE MOMENT THEY TOUCHED DOWN, BRYANT WAS CALLED TO SEE THE STATION COMMANDER...

WE WANT YOU TO TAKE OVER A NEW FIGHTER, BRYANT. IT'S A BIT HUSH-HUSH AT PRESENT - BUT YOU ARE JUST THE MAN FOR THE JOB...

IS IT THE NEW JAGUAR STREAK? I HEARD SOMETHING ABOUT IT...

DESPITE BRYANT'S ENTHUSIASM OVER THE NEW FIGHTER, THE STATION COMMANDER LOOKED A LITTLE GRIM. BRYANT WAS TO REMEMBER HIS WORDS MUCH LATER...

DISCOUNT ANY RUMOURS YOU'VE HEARD, BRYANT. THE NEW STREAK IS AN ENTIRELY UNKNOWN QUANTITY. WHOEVER FLIES HER FIRST WILL BE TAKING A GOOD DEAL MORE THAN HIS OWN LIFE IN HIS HANDS...

I UNDERSTAND, SIR. WHEN DO I START?

# The Sky's The Limit

THE WHEELS TURNED FAST AFTER THAT FIRST INTERVIEW. IT WAS AT A SMALL, SECRET AIRSTRIP THAT PETER BRYANT AND JOHNNY LEVIS FIRST TOOK OVER THE PROTOTYPE FIGHTER...

SHE LOOKS A BEAUTY, SKIPPER!

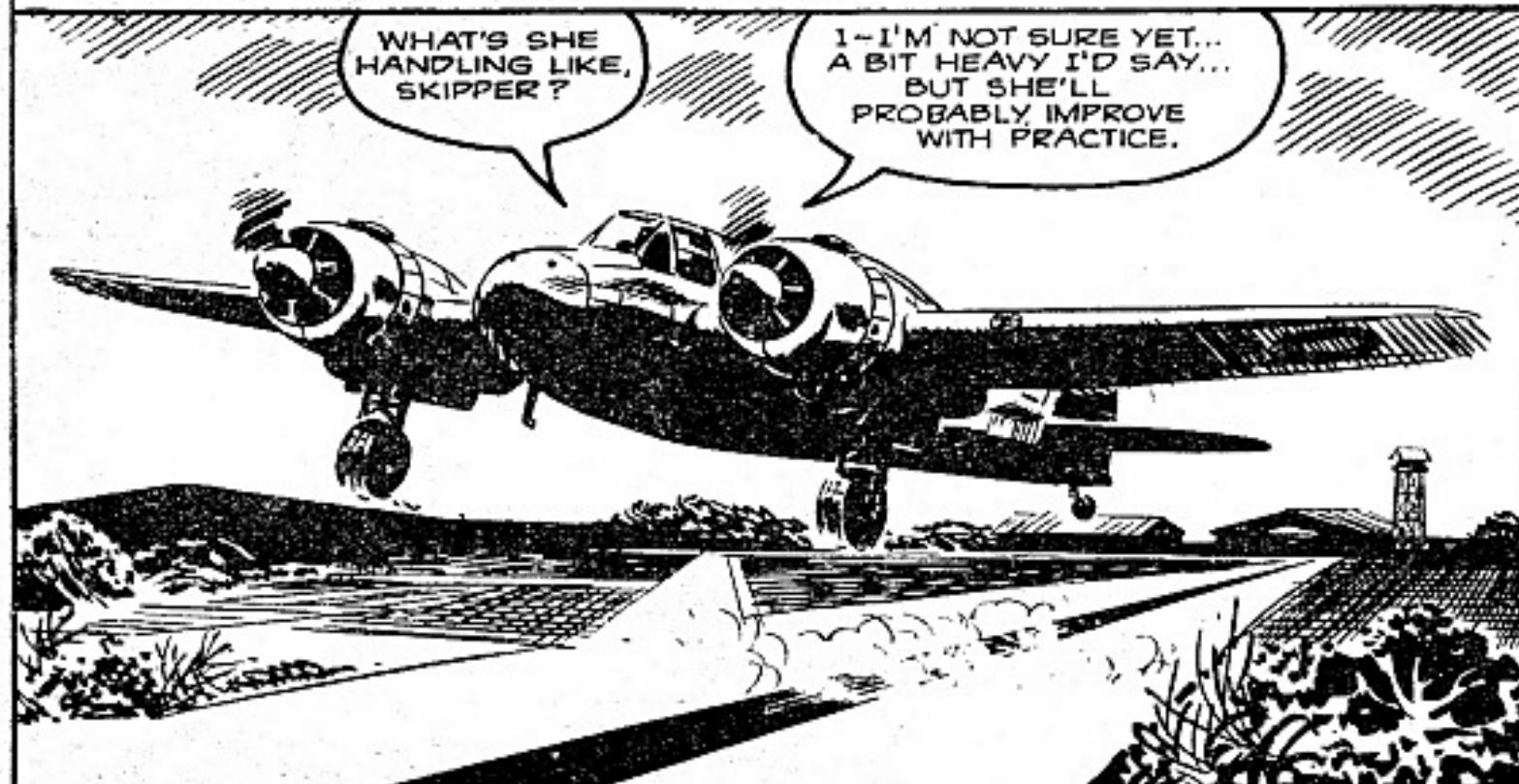
THE DESIGN'S FIVE YEARS AHEAD OF ITS TIME, SO THEY SAY.



BUT DESPITE HIS PRETENCE OF CONFIDENCE, BRYANT FELT JITTERY ABOUT THE TEST FLIGHTS. THE RUMOURS HE HAD HEARD ABOUT THE NEW PLANE - THAT IT WAS UNSTABLE, UNRELIABLE IN AN EMERGENCY - HAUNTED HIM AS THEY CLIMBED TOWARDS THE STARS THAT EVENING ...

WHAT'S SHE HANDLING LIKE, SKIPPER?

I-I'M NOT SURE YET... A BIT HEAVY I'D SAY... BUT SHE'LL PROBABLY IMPROVE WITH PRACTICE.



SUDDENLY, THERE WAS A CRACKLE IN BRYANT'S EARPHONES...

BLAZER TWO FOUR.  
BANDIT APPROACHING.  
ANGELS ELEVEN.  
AVOID CONTACT.

ROGER,  
BOFFIN.

THE NEWS OF THE PROWLING ENEMY PLANE BROUGHT A DULL SENSE OF UNEASE TO BRYANT...

I'LL CLIMB TO FIFTEEN THOUSAND FEET...WE'D BETTER HAVE A BIT OF HEIGHT IN HAND...

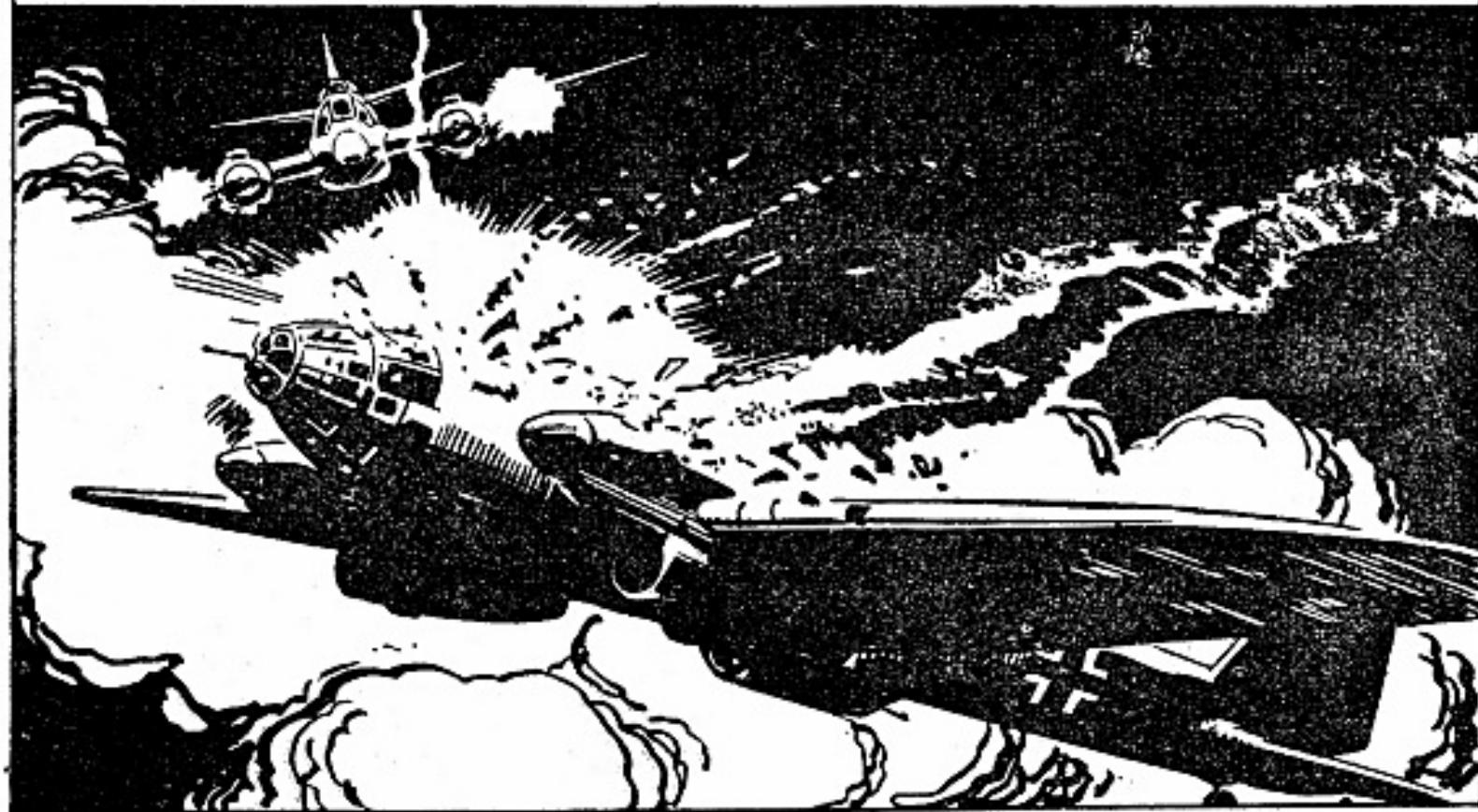
THERE'S THE BANDIT, SKIPPER - AND HE'D BE A SITTING TARGET! LET'S HAVE A CRACK AT HIM!

## The Sky's The Limit

RYANT WAS JERKED INTO ACTION. THE NEW FIGHTER RESPONDED EAGERLY TO HIS HANDLING AS HE FLUNG IT TOWARDS THE GERMAN BOMBER ...

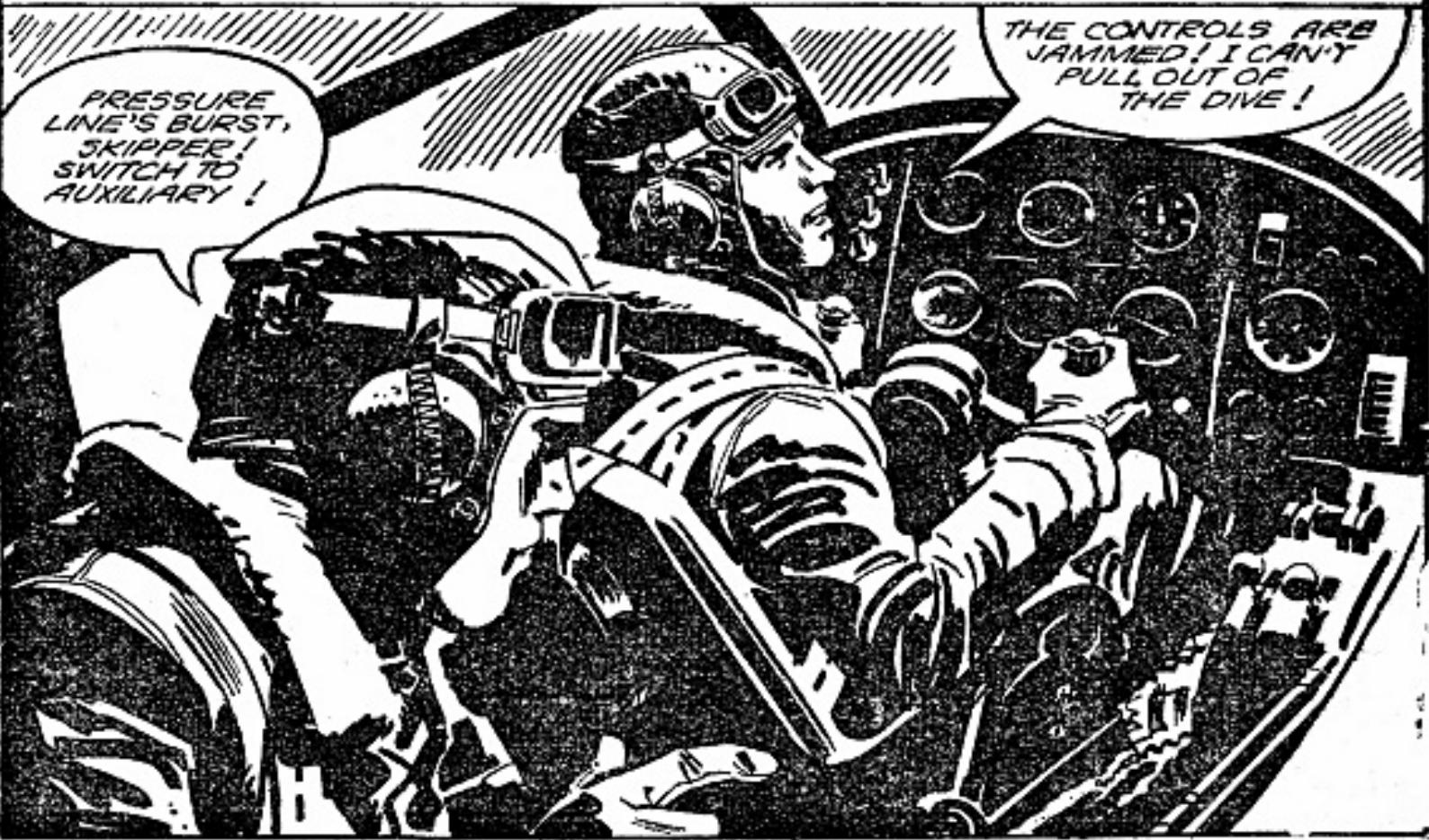


...AND NEXT INSTANT, THE FLASHING GUNS OF THE BRITISH PLANE RIPPED THE NIGHT APART WITH THUNDER. THE HEINKEL BLEW UP IN A SHOWER OF ALUMINIUM DEBRIS AND FLAMES!



# The Sky's The Limit

FOR JOHNNY LEVIS IT WAS ANOTHER MOMENT OF TRIUMPH—ANOTHER ONE FOR THE SCORE. BUT AS HE STARTED TO SPEAK, BRYANT GAVE A SHOUT OF ALARM...



THE FEW SECONDS THAT FOLLOWED WERE A NIGHTMARE. ONE MOMENT HE WAS REACHING FOR THE PRESSURE LINE CONTROL, NEXT MOMENT HE WAS PLUNGING THROUGH THE COLD, DARK NIGHT, HIS PARACHUTE BLOSSOMING ABOVE HIM.



# The Sky's The Limit

IT WAS MUCH LATER WHEN BRYANT REALISED WHAT HAD GONE WRONG. HIS NUMBED FINGERS HAD BLUNDERED... AND HE HAD PRESSED THE EJECTION SEAT CONTROL. BUT THE INQUIRY HAD RELIEVED HIM OF RESPONSIBILITY...

WE FIND THAT FLIGHT LIEUTENANT BRYANT ACTED IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE SERVICE IN ATTACKING THE ENEMY PLANE. IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT HIS OWN AIRCRAFT WAS SHOT DOWN WITH THE LOSS OF ONE MAN...

SHOT DOWN? THEY DON'T KNOW IT WAS MY FAULT. THE PLANE CRASHED - AND KILLED POOR JOHNNY...



THE WRECKAGE OF THE NEW FIGHTER HAD BEEN SO SHATTERED THAT THE EXPERTS HAD NEVER FOUND THE REAL REASON FOR THE CRASH. BRYANT HAD ASKED FOR A POSTING TO THE FAR EAST TO GET AWAY FROM THE MEMORIES OF THAT FATEFUL MISSION...

YOU'RE NOT LOOKING TOO WELL, OLD CHAP. NEED A CHECK-UP?

I'M OKAY, DOC - IT'S JUST THE HEAT...

I'LL NEVER FORGET THAT NIGHT - AND JOHNNY'S FACE

BRYANT STALKED OUT OF THE DUG-OUT TO WATCH THE HURRICANES COME IN TO LAND ON THE BATTERED AIRSTRIP...

IT'S TAKING US ALL OUR TIME TO HOLD OUT HERE... NO REPLACEMENTS, LACK OF FUEL...



# The Sky's The Limit

THAT NIGHT, THREE MORE PLANES LANDED AT MINGALA AIRSTRIP. THREE UNEXPECTED PLANES...BATTERED AMERICAN P.40 FIGHTERS...

VISITORS, SIR! YANK KITES BY THE LOOK OF 'EM!

AMERICAN PLANES?

THE PILOTS OF THE THREE PLANES WERE SOON STANDING BEFORE WING COMMANDER BRYANT...

MY NAMES HAMES. MY FRIENDS HERE ARE LIEUTENANT RAWSON AND LIEUTENANT HOLT...

THIS IS AN R.A.F STATION, HAMES! LUCKY MY FIGHTERS WEREN'T IN THE AIR~YOU MIGHT HAVE BEEN MISTAKEN FOR ZEROES! BUT WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?



## The Sky's The Limit

HAMES EXPLAINED~AND BRYANT BEGAN TO EYE HIM COLDLY...

OUR THREE PLANES ARE ALL THAT'S LEFT OF A FLYING TIGER SQUADRON!

FLYING TIGERS! I'VE HEARD ABOUT YOU... YOU'RE MERCENARIES.. HIRED FIGHTERS!

HAMES' WORDS BROUGHT EVERYTHING INTO SHARP FOCUS. THE FLYING TIGERS WERE A GROUP OF PILOTS, FORMED BY THE CHINESE TO CHECK JAP AIR ATTACKS ON THEIR SOIL...

YOU HAD NO AUTHORITY TO LAND HERE.. I SHALL HAVE TO IMPOUND YOUR PLANES AND HOLD YOU PENDING ORDERS...

WE HAD NO CHOICE! WE NEED TO FLY TO RANGOON!

SURE! IT WAS TOUGH WORK WE WERE DOING, BUT IT PAID WELL. NOW WE WANT A CHANCE TO SPEND THE MONEY!



THE WORDS OF THE AMERICAN BROUGHT OUT THE BRISTLING ANGER IN BRYANT...

I'M CERTAINLY NOT GIVING YOU PETROL FROM OUR SMALL SUPPLY TO GET YOU TO RANGOON WITH YOUR BLOOD MONEY!

YOU MEAN... WE'RE STUCK HERE? YOU CAN'T DO THAT TO US!



**THE THREE FLYING  
TIGERS LOUNGED  
INSOLENTLY THROUGH  
THE DAYS THAT  
FOLLOWED, FINALLY...**

IS THIS ALL YOU HAVE TO  
DO WITH YOUR TIME? MY  
PILOTS ARE TIRED OUT  
FROM KEEPING THIS  
AIRFIELD INTACT!  
AND YOU PLAY  
CARDS!

YOU  
CAN SOON  
GET RID OF US  
BY FUELLED  
OUR PLANES,  
BRYANT/



THE PRESENCE OF  
THE THREE MEN  
BEGAN TO MAKE  
ITSELF FELT,  
UNDERMINING THE  
MORALE OF THE  
R.A.F. FLYERS...

BEATS ME WHY THE  
OLD MAN ALLOWS THOSE  
THREE SHIRKERS TO  
HANG ON  
HERE...

THOSE YANKEE  
PLANES ARE IN  
GOOD SHAPE.  
THEY COULD  
HELP US... IF  
THEIR PILOTS  
WEREN'T TOO  
SCARED.



## The Sky's The Limit

THAT NIGHT, VINCENT HAMES CAME TO SEE BRYANT. HE PUT HIS CARDS ON THE TABLE...

LOOK, WING COMMANDER - THIS WAR ISN'T GOING TO LAST FOR EVER. I CAN MAKE IT WORTH YOUR WHILE TO FUEL ONE OF THOSE PLANES...

YOU FOOL, HAMES! YOU THINK YOU CAN BRIBE ME! GET OUT OF HERE - BEFORE I THROW YOU OUT!

THE TWO MEN FACED EACH OTHER ANGRILY. THEN HAMES TURNED AWAY ABRUPTLY...

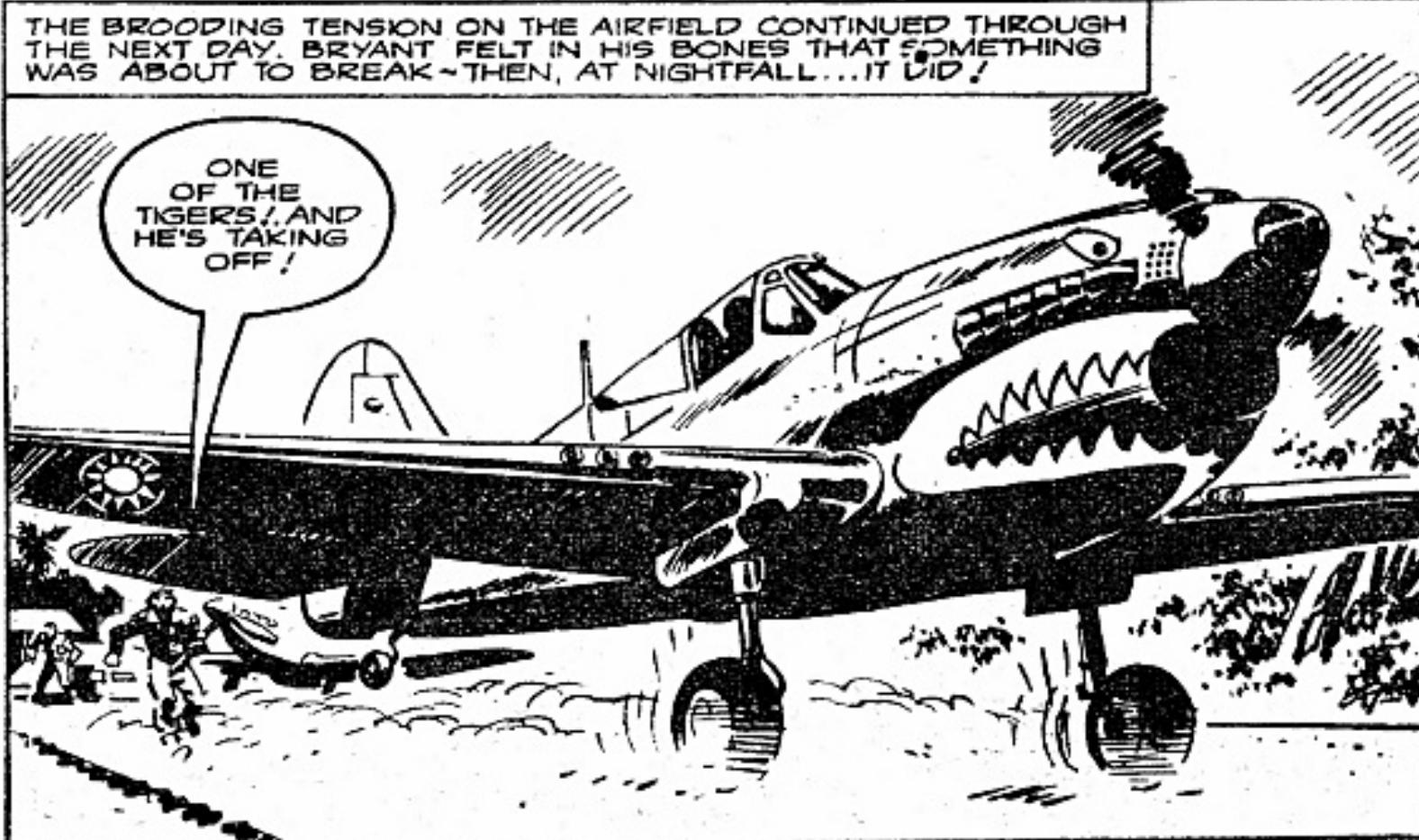
YOU SNOOTY R.A.F. TYPES MAKE ME SICK! I WAS IN THE R.A.F. ONCE! MAYBE I'LL TELL YOU THE STORY SOMETIME - IF YOU'RE STILL ALIVE TO HEAR IT!

SO THAT'S WHERE HE LEARNED TO FLY...



THE BROODING TENSION ON THE AIRFIELD CONTINUED THROUGH THE NEXT DAY. BRYANT FELT IN HIS BONES THAT SOMETHING WAS ABOUT TO BREAK - THEN, AT NIGHTFALL... IT DID!

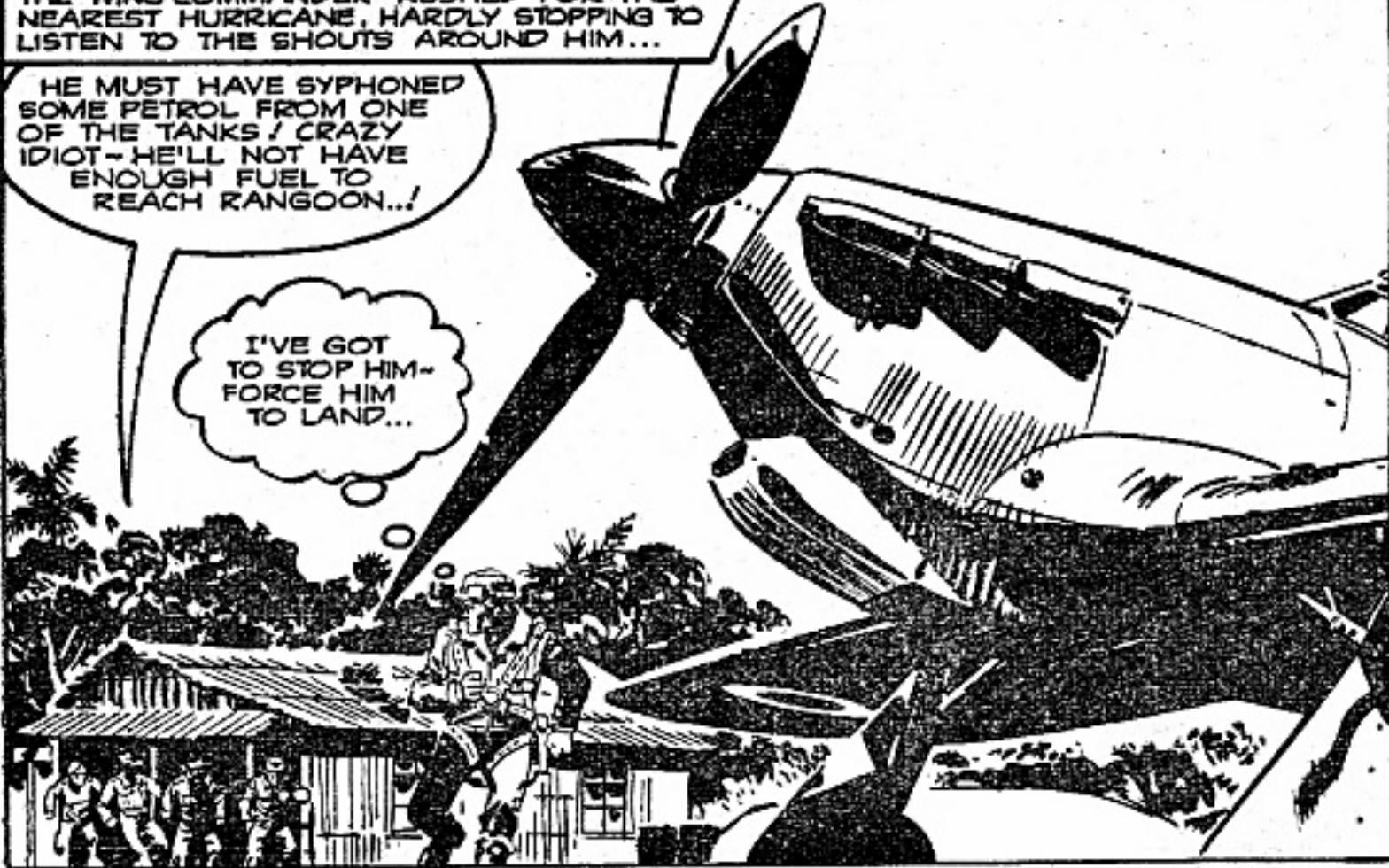
ONE OF THE TIGERS! AND HE'S TAKING OFF!



THE WING COMMANDER RUSHED FOR THE NEAREST HURRICANE, HARDLY STOPPING TO LISTEN TO THE SHOUTS AROUND HIM...

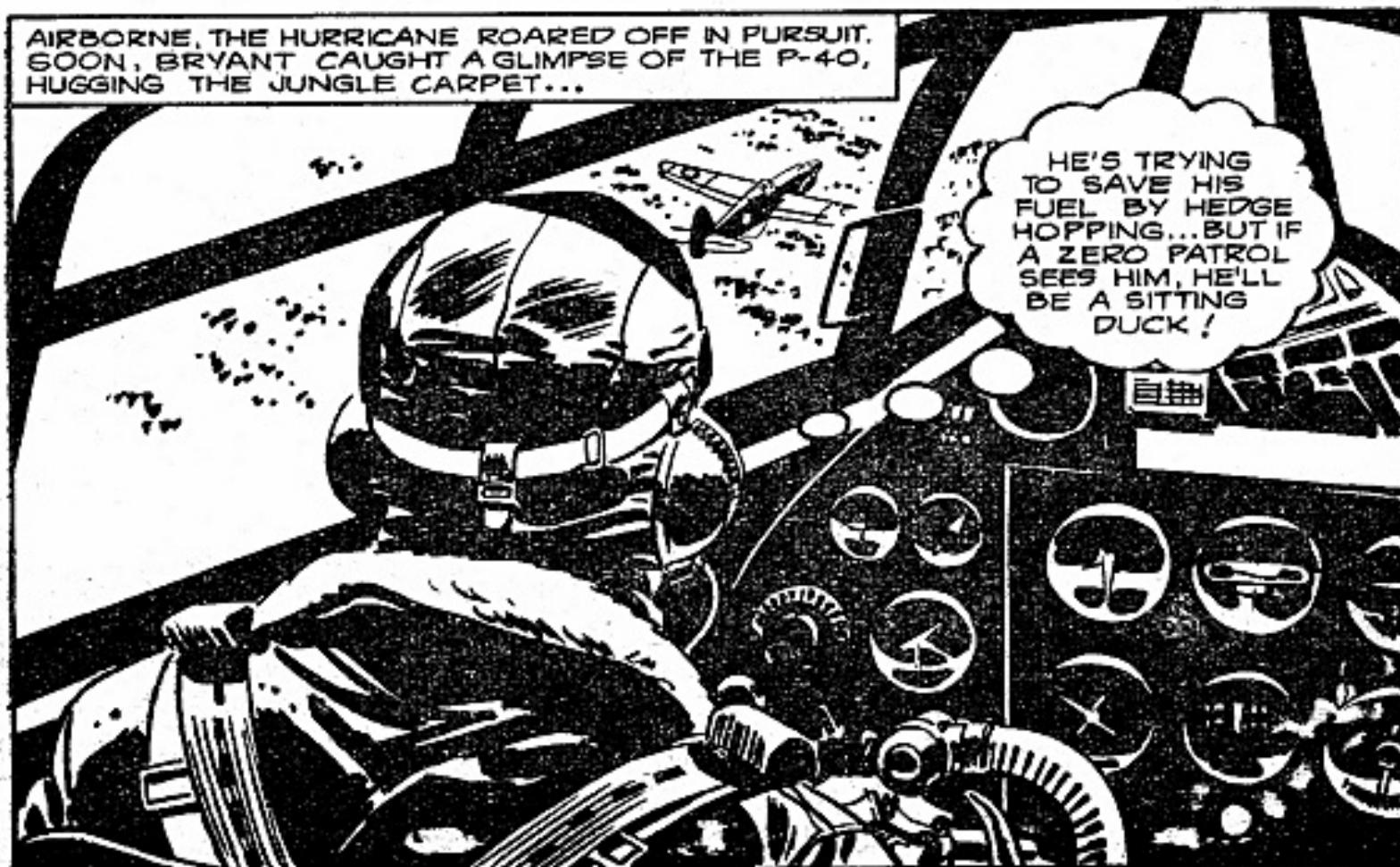
HE MUST HAVE SYPHONED SOME PETROL FROM ONE OF THE TANKS! CRAZY IDIOT - HE'LL NOT HAVE ENOUGH FUEL TO REACH RANGOON...

I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM - FORCE HIM TO LAND...



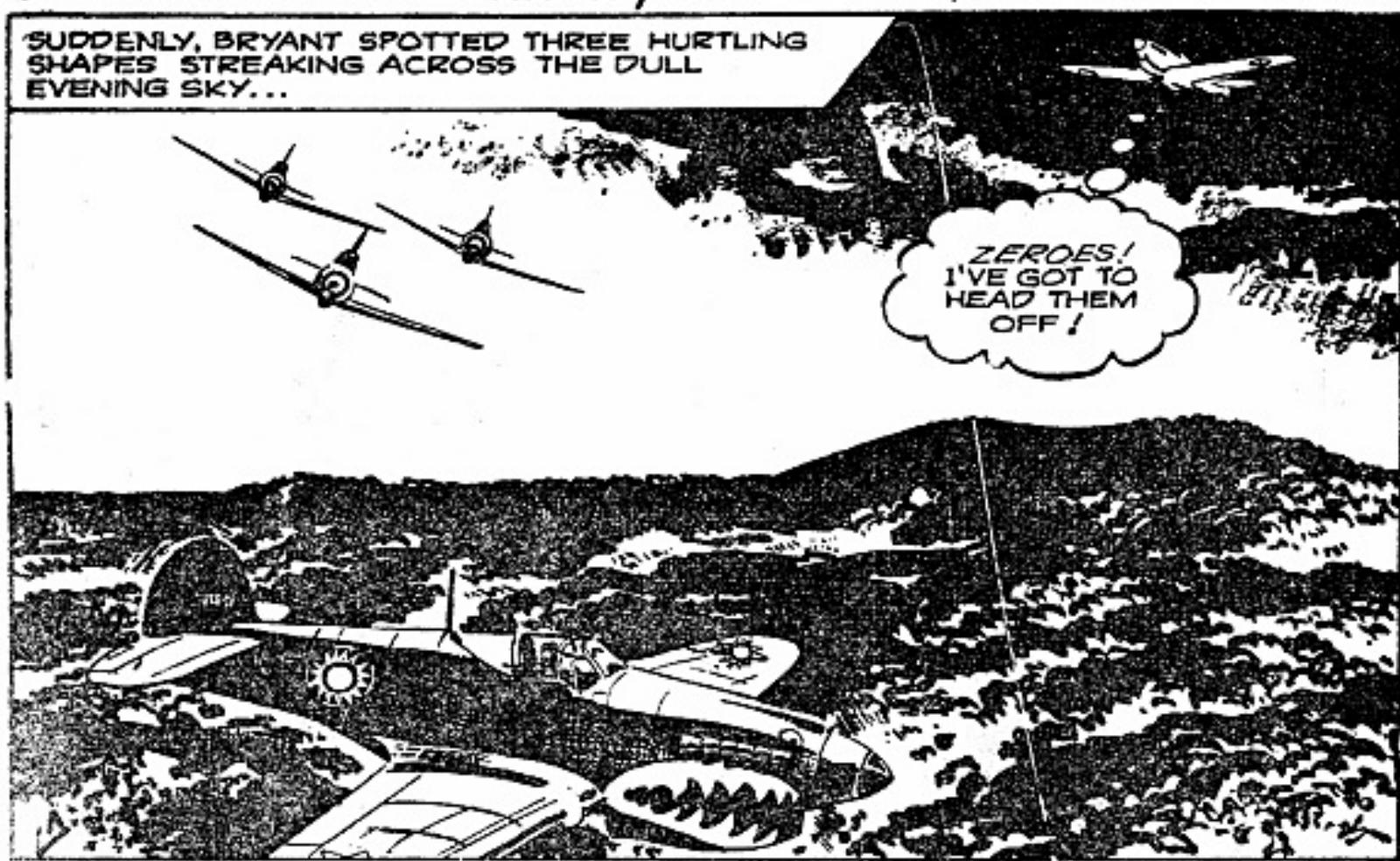
AIRBORNE, THE HURRICANE ROARED OFF IN PURSUIT. SOON, BRYANT CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF THE P-40, HUGGING THE JUNGLE CARPET...

HE'S TRYING TO SAVE HIS FUEL BY HEDGE HOPPING... BUT IF A ZERO PATROL SEES HIM, HE'LL BE A SITTING DUCK!

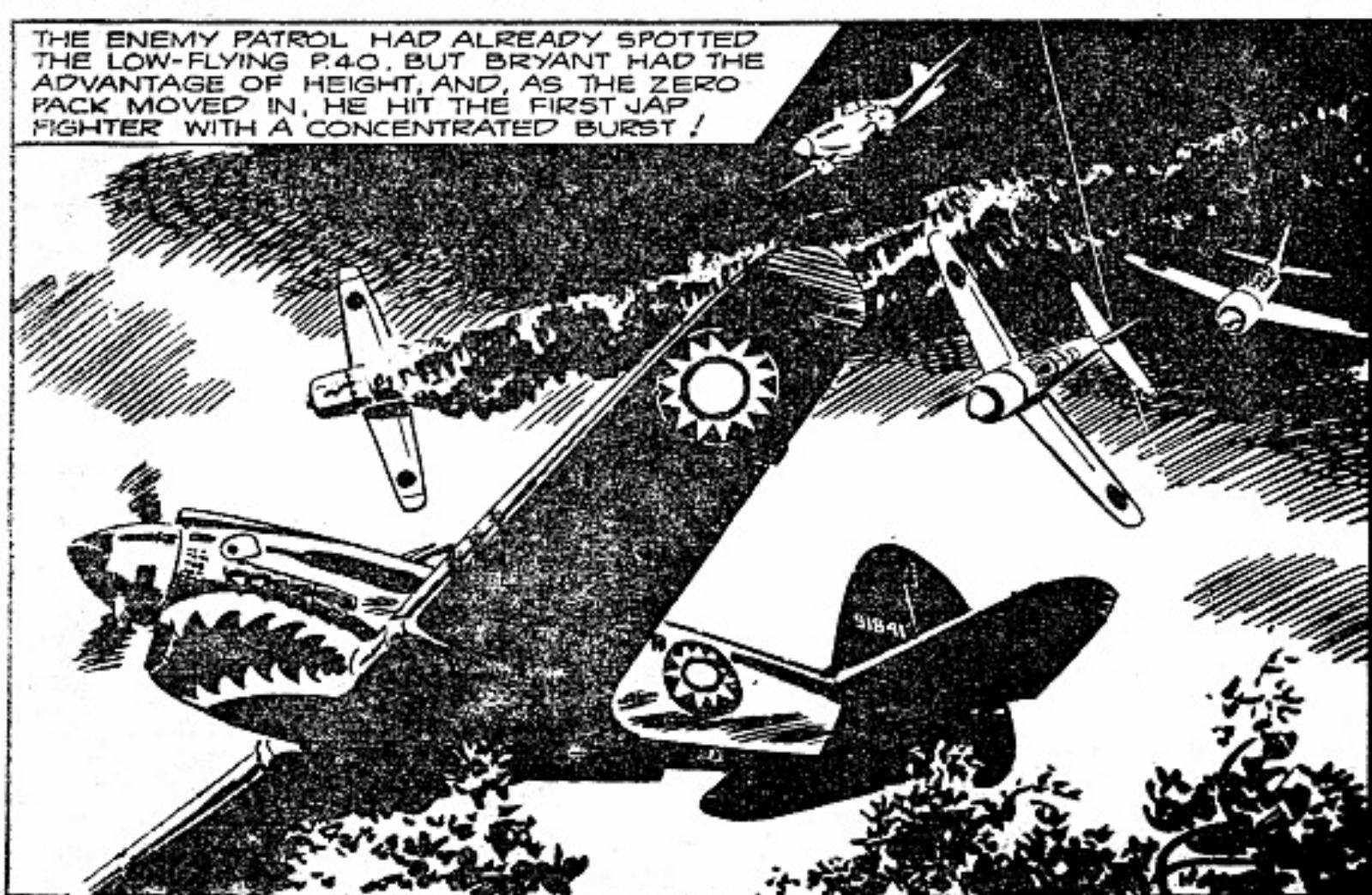


## The Sky's The Limit

SUDDENLY, BRYANT SPOTTED THREE HURTLING SHAPES STREAKING ACROSS THE DULL EVENING SKY...



THE ENEMY PATROL HAD ALREADY SPOTTED THE LOW-FLYING P.40, BUT BRYANT HAD THE ADVANTAGE OF HEIGHT, AND, AS THE ZERO PACK MOVED IN, HE HIT THE FIRST JAP FIGHTER WITH A CONCENTRATED BURST!



A VICIOUS DOG-FIGHT STARTED ABOVE THE JUNGLE...  
AND BRYANT FELT THE SUDDEN THUDS AS  
BULLETS RAKED THE HURRICANE?

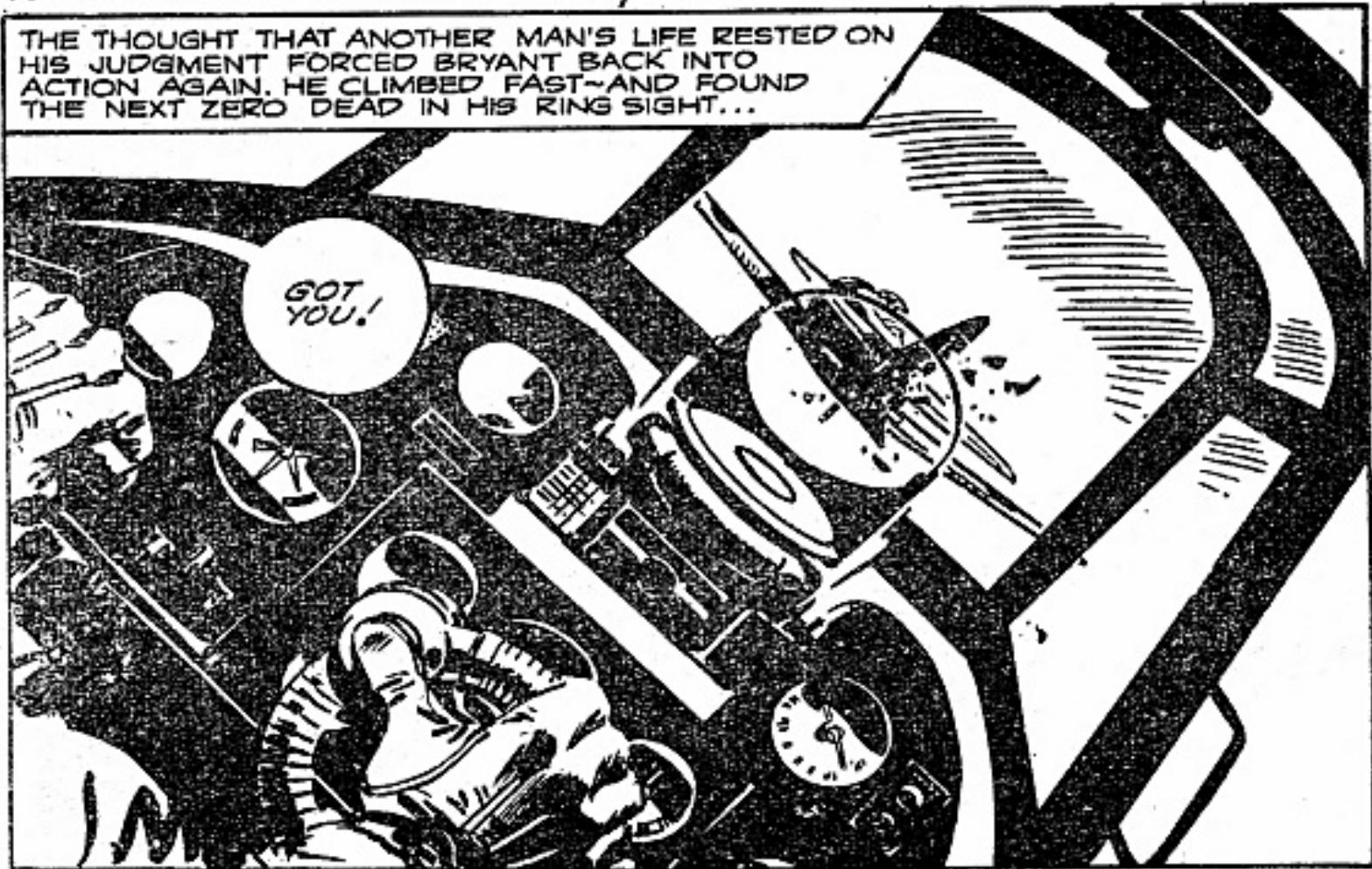


IN THOSE FEW SECONDS OF NUMBING SHOCK, ALL THE OLD FEAR RUSHED BACK INTO BRYANT'S MIND. HE REMEMBERED ANOTHER NIGHT, SITTING IN THE COCKPIT OF A PLANE OUT OF CONTROL...

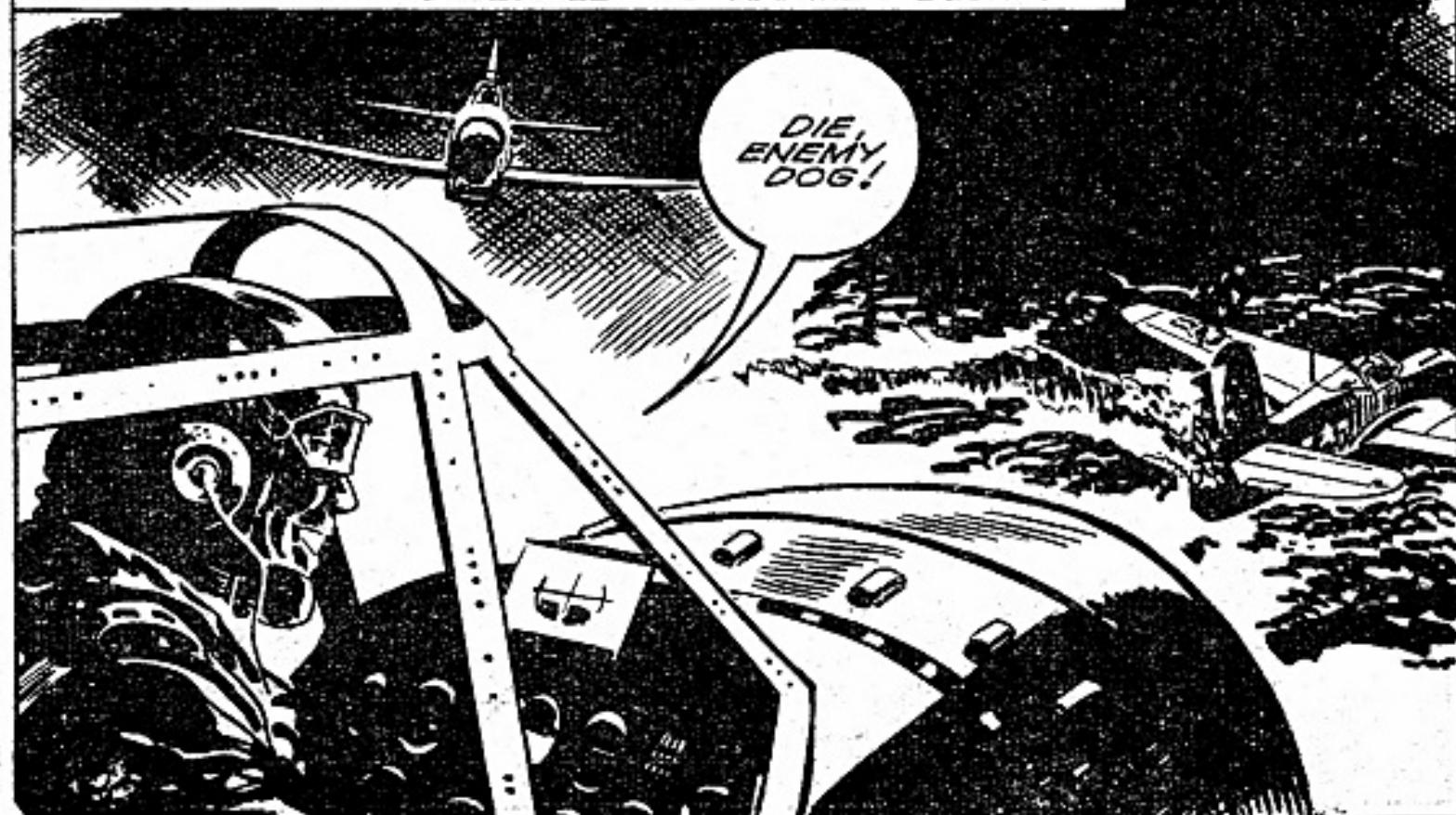


## The Sky's The Limit

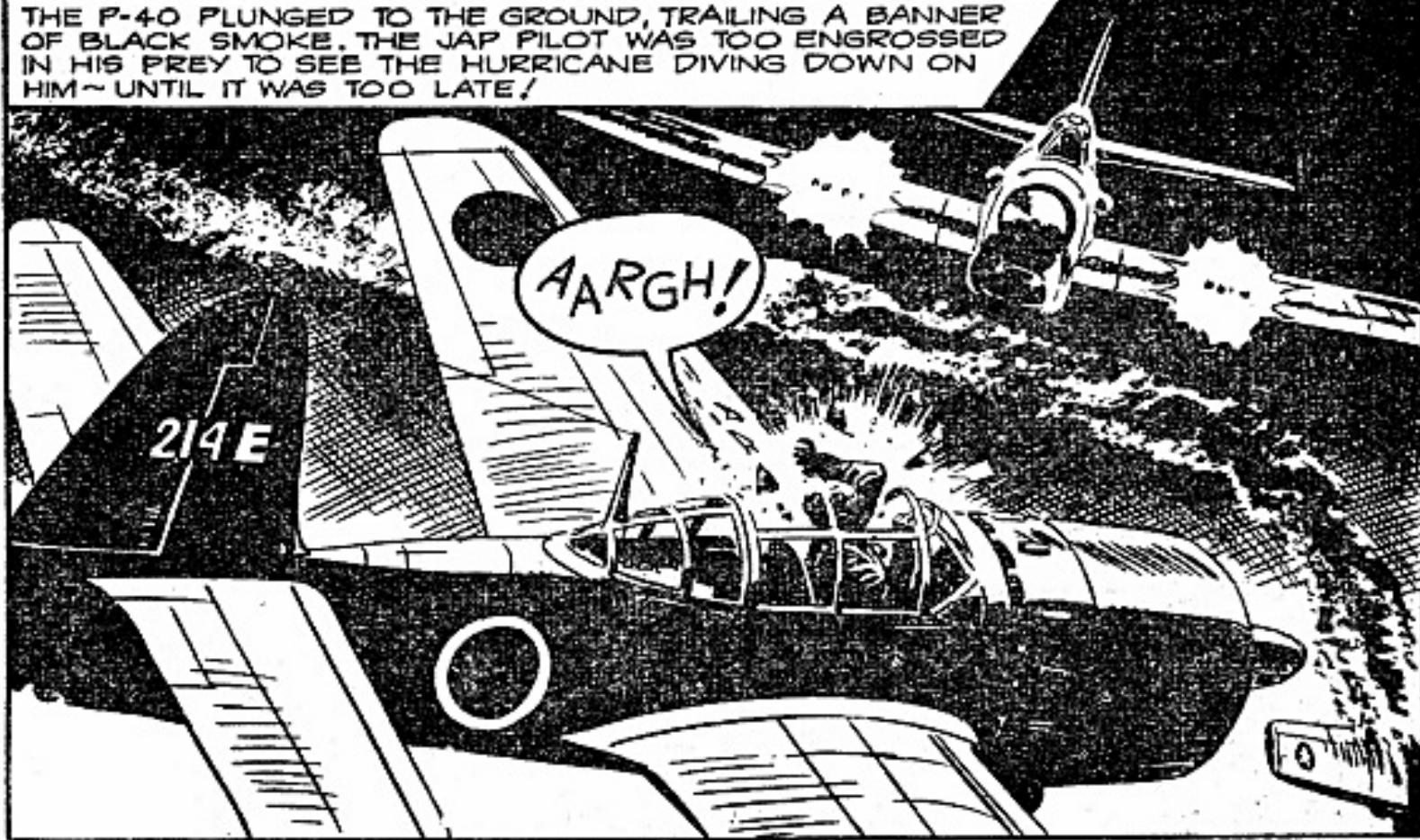
THE THOUGHT THAT ANOTHER MAN'S LIFE RESTED ON HIS JUDGMENT FORCED BRYANT BACK INTO ACTION AGAIN. HE CLIMBED FAST-AND FOUND THE NEXT ZERO DEAD IN HIS RING SIGHT...



BUT THE LAST OF THE ENEMY FIGHTERS HAD LOCKED ON TO THE P-40'S TAIL. THE SKY WAS LICKED WITH CRIMSON FIRE AS ITS GUNS SPURTED LETHAL HAMMER BLOWS.



THE P-40 PLUNGED TO THE GROUND, TRAILING A BANNER OF BLACK SMOKE. THE JAP PILOT WAS TOO ENgrossed IN HIS PREY TO SEE THE HURRICANE DIVING DOWN ON HIM ~ UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE!



THE BATTLE WAS OVER. BRYANT CIRCLED THE RIBBON OF SMOKE WHICH ROSE FROM THE CRASHED P-40, THEN FLEW BACK TO BASE. BUT, IN THE JUNGLE, OTHER EYES HAD SEEN THE CRASH...



## The Sky's The Limit

AT BASE, BRYANT HEARD URGENT NEWS...

THE OTHER TWO TIGER PILOTS HAVE RUN FOR IT, SIR ! THEY'VE TAKEN A COUPLE OF RIFLES AND AMMO WITH THEM !

THE FOOLS ! IF THEY RUN INTO THE JAPS, THEY'VE HAD IT !

AT THE AIRFIELD, BRYANT CAME TO A QUICK DECISION, AS HE SPOKE TO THE MEDICAL OFFICER...

THAT YANKEE PILOT MAY HAVE SURVIVED THE CRASH, SIR ... YOU CAN'T LEAVE HIM FOR THE JAPS ...

DON'T WORRY ~ I'M GOING OUT FOR HIM. BUT FOR ONE REASON ONLY ~ HE MIGHT TELL THE JAPS SOMETHING THEY WANT TO KNOW !



WITH THE M.O. AND THREE MEN, BRYANT SET OUT. HE REALISED ONLY TOO WELL THE DANGER OF A JAP ATTACK ON THE AIRFIELD, IF THE ENEMY FOUND OUT HOW DEPLETED THE GROUND DEFENCES WERE...

BRYANT'S COLD-BLOODED, BUT HE'S RIGHT, I SUPPOSE. WE CAN'T LET THOSE THREE MEN GIVE US AWAY.

I'VE GOT TO FIND THOSE THREE IDIOTS - KEEP THEM OUT OF JAP HANDS.



SUDDENLY, A SHAFT OF CLEAR MOONLIGHT SHOWED A SMALL CLEARING AHEAD OF THEM AND REVEALED THE JAP PATROL RUNNING ON TO THE SCENE...

THAT ENEMY PATROL HAS FOUND HIM!  
RUSH THEM!



TAKEN BY SURPRISE IN THEIR MOMENT OF SUCCESS, THE JAPS HAD LITTLE CHANCE TO PUT UP MUCH RESISTANCE...



## The Sky's The Limit

BRYANT FOUND THE M.O. BANDAGING THE AMERICAN, HOLT...

SO YOU WERE THE PILOT, HOLT... WHERE ARE HAMES AND RAWSON?

HAMES FIGURED THEY STOOD A BETTER CHANCE IN THE JUNGLE...

BUT THE JUNGLE'S ALIVE WITH JAP PATROLS! THEY'RE CRAZY!



CRAZY! I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT. WE WERE CRAZY WITH THAT BOUNTY MONEY... BUT MAYBE I'M STARTING TO LEARN SOMETHING.

LEARN SOMETHING, HOLT?



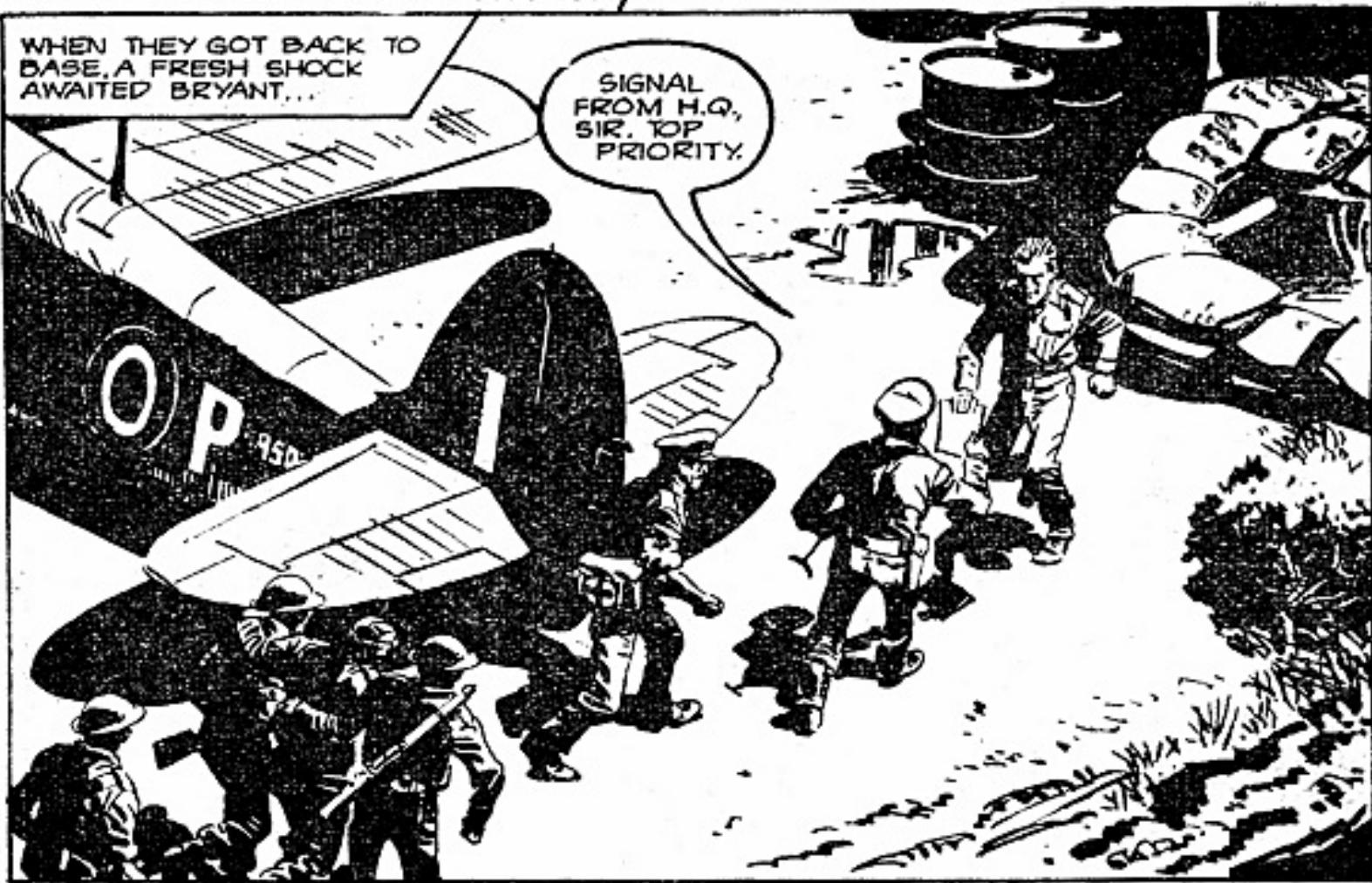
YES... I'VE LEARNED YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY FROM THE JAPS ~ OR THE WAR. BUT I GUESS A MAN IS ENTITLED TO ONE MISTAKE IN HIS LIFE...

I MADE A MISTAKE, TOO... BUT IT KILLED JOHNNY LEVIS!



WHEN THEY GOT BACK TO BASE, A FRESH SHOCK AWAITED BRYANT...

SIGNAL FROM H.Q., SIR, TOP PRIORITY.



HE READ THE SIGNAL CAREFULLY AND STOOD, STARING BLEAKLY INTO SPACE AS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MESSAGE DAWNED ON HIM ...

ANYTHING WRONG, SIR?

PLENTY.. THE JAPS HAVE MADE A MAJOR BREAK-THROUGH. WE'RE CUT OFF FROM GROUND SUPPORT!



## The Sky's The Limit

AT THAT MOMENT, A SAVAGE JAP ASSAULT WAS TAKING PLACE AGAINST THE SCATTERED REMNANTS OF THE BRITISH FORCES TRYING TO WITHDRAW FROM KUMMING, NOT TEN MILES AWAY...

GANZAI!  
WE SHALL  
DRIVE THEM  
BACK TO THE  
COAST!

THEY FLEE!  
CUT THEM  
DOWN!



THE RAGGED ALLIED LINE BROKE UNDER THE TERRIBLE POUNDING. BUT STILL, ISOLATED POCKETS OF MEN MADE A GALLANT ATTEMPT TO HOLD OUT...

KEEP IT UP,  
LADS! WE'RE  
NOT LICKED  
YET!



TO MOP UP THE LAST TRACES OF RESISTANCE, THE JAP ARTILLERY LAID ON A HEAVY BARRAGE. TRAPPED IN THE ONSLAUGHT OF STEEL, TWO DESPERATE FUGITIVES REELED BLINDLY THROUGH THE JUNGLE...

RAWSON,  
DARN YOU!  
COME BACK  
HERE!

I CAN'T  
STAND IT!  
I'VE GOT  
TO GET  
AWAY!



RAWSON AND HAMES, THE EX-FLYING TIGER PILOTS, HAD BEEN TRYING TO RUN THE GAUNTLET OF JAP PATROLS TO REACH RANGOON, WHEN THE SHELLING BURST AROUND THEM...

HANK RAWSON LAY ON THE GROUND, GROANING IN PAIN, AS THE HORROR OF THE BARRAGE GRADUALLY LIFTED. IT WAS THERE THAT HAMES FINALLY FOUND HIM...

AAGH!  
MY LEG!



RAWSON!  
WHERE ARE  
YOU?

HERE,  
HAMES! I'M  
HERE!



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# The Sky's The Limit

HAMES TOOK ONE LOOK AT THE WOUNDED MAN AND ROSE TO HIS FEET SLOWLY...

YOU'LL NEVER  
MAKE IT TO  
RANGOON WITH  
THAT HOLE IN  
YOUR LEG,  
RAWSON.

YOU CAN'T  
LEAVE ME HERE,  
HAMES ! YOU'VE GOT  
TO HELP ME ! I'LL  
PAY YOU...



THE TWO MEN STARED BLEAKLY AT EACH OTHER, BOTH  
HAD GAMBLED, NOW ONE HAD LOST...

EVERYTHING !  
EVERYTHING I'VE  
GOT, HAMES ! BUT  
GET ME BACK  
TO THE  
AIRFIELD...

WHAT'S YOUR  
LIFE WORTH,  
RAWSON ?

THAT  
JUST ABOUT  
MAKES IT  
WORTH MY  
WHILE TO GO  
BACK, RAWSON.  
BUT ONLY  
JUST...



HOURS LATER,  
THE TWO MEN  
STAGGERED ON  
TO THE AIRSTRIP  
AT MINGALA...

HAMES  
AND RAWSON!  
THEY'VE COME  
BACK!

RAWSON  
LOOKS BAD...  
HE'LL NEED  
ATTENTION.



HAMES REPORTED TO WING  
COMMANDER BRYANT. THE  
TWO MEN FACED EACH  
OTHER ONCE MORE, STILL  
AWARE OF THE ENMITY THAT  
BURNED BETWEEN THEM...

THE JAPS HAVE  
BROKEN CLEAN  
THROUGH WHAT'S  
LEFT OF THE GROUND  
SUPPORT, BRYANT.  
YOU'VE GOT TO LET  
US FLY OUT WITH  
WHAT FUEL  
YOU'VE GOT  
LEFT...

YOU HAVEN'T  
COME BACK TO  
FLY TO SAFETY,  
HAMES! MINGALA  
STAYS  
OPERATIONAL!



## The Sky's The Limit

BRYANT WALKED AWAY, HAMES STARING FURIOUSLY AFTER HIM...

HE HASN'T GOT A CHANCE OF HOLDING OUT! I'VE GOT TO MAKE ANOTHER BREAK FOR IT. I'M NOT GOING TO BE BUMPED OFF BY THE JAPS WITH ALL THE MONEY I'VE GOT!



BRYANT WAS AS GOOD AS HIS WORD. MINGALA REMAINED OPERATIONAL, AND, THROUGH THE DAYS AND NIGHTS THAT FOLLOWED, HURRICANES STRAFED THE JAP LINES OF COMMUNICATION...

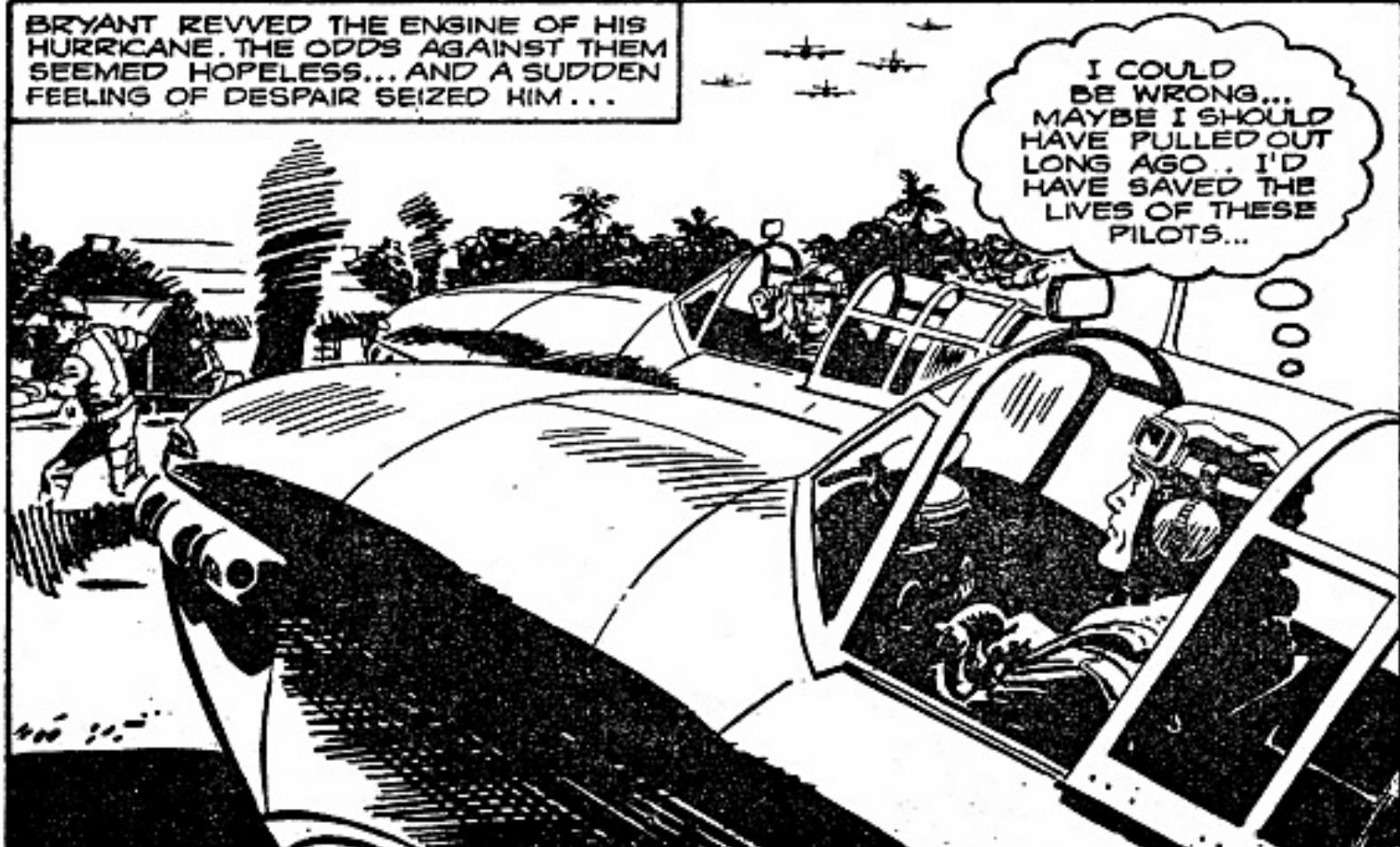
THIS'LL SAVE THE ARMY BOYS A LOT OF TROUBLE!



THE AIR STRIKES CONTINUED—BUT THE ENEMY COUNTER-ATTACK CAME SAVAGELY ONE DUSK, HERALDED BY THE WHINE OF MITSUBISHI ENGINES...

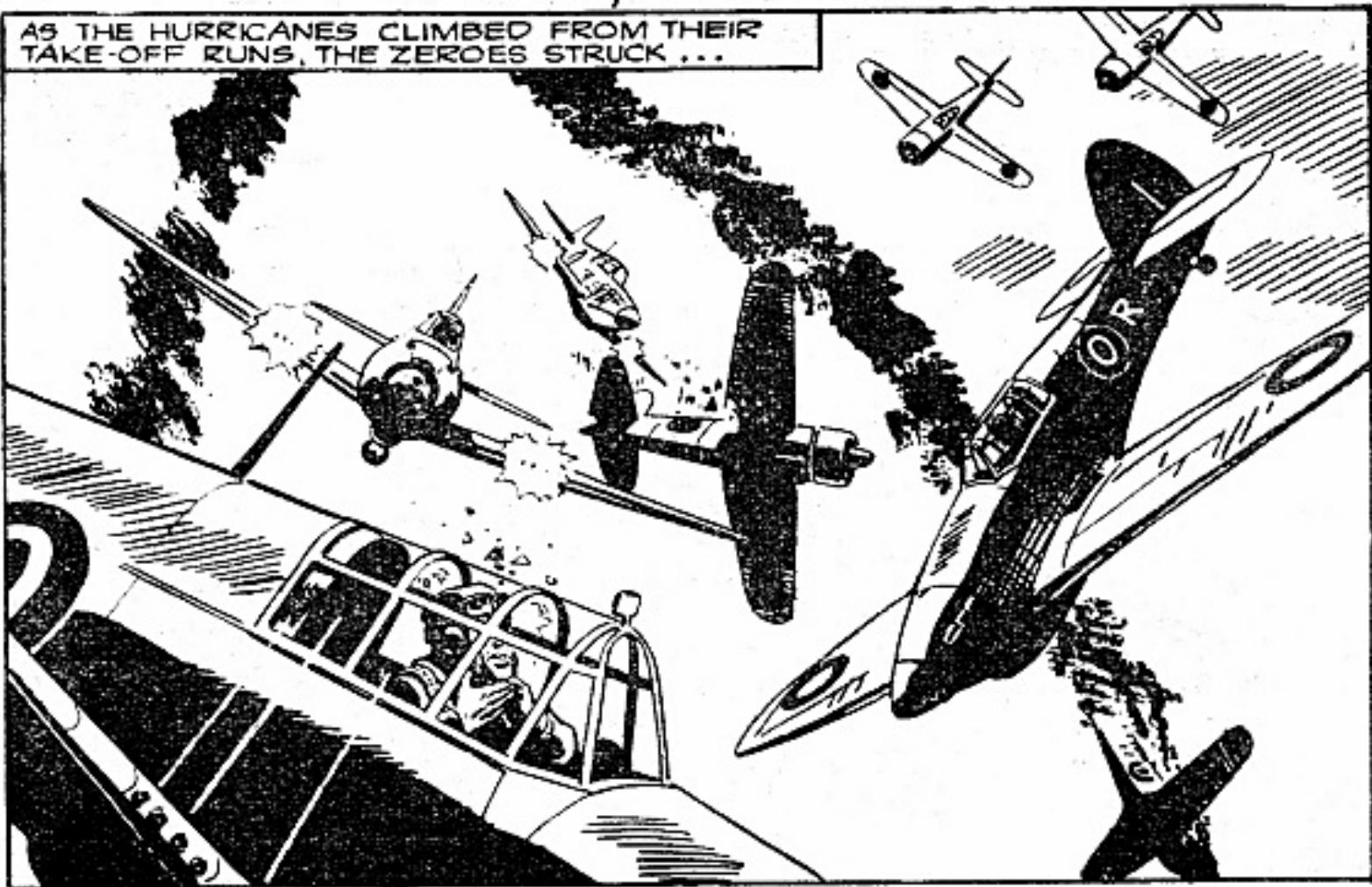


BRYANT REVVED THE ENGINE OF HIS HURRICANE. THE ODDS AGAINST THEM SEEMED HOPELESS... AND A SUDDEN FEELING OF DESPAIR SEIZED HIM...



## The Sky's The Limit

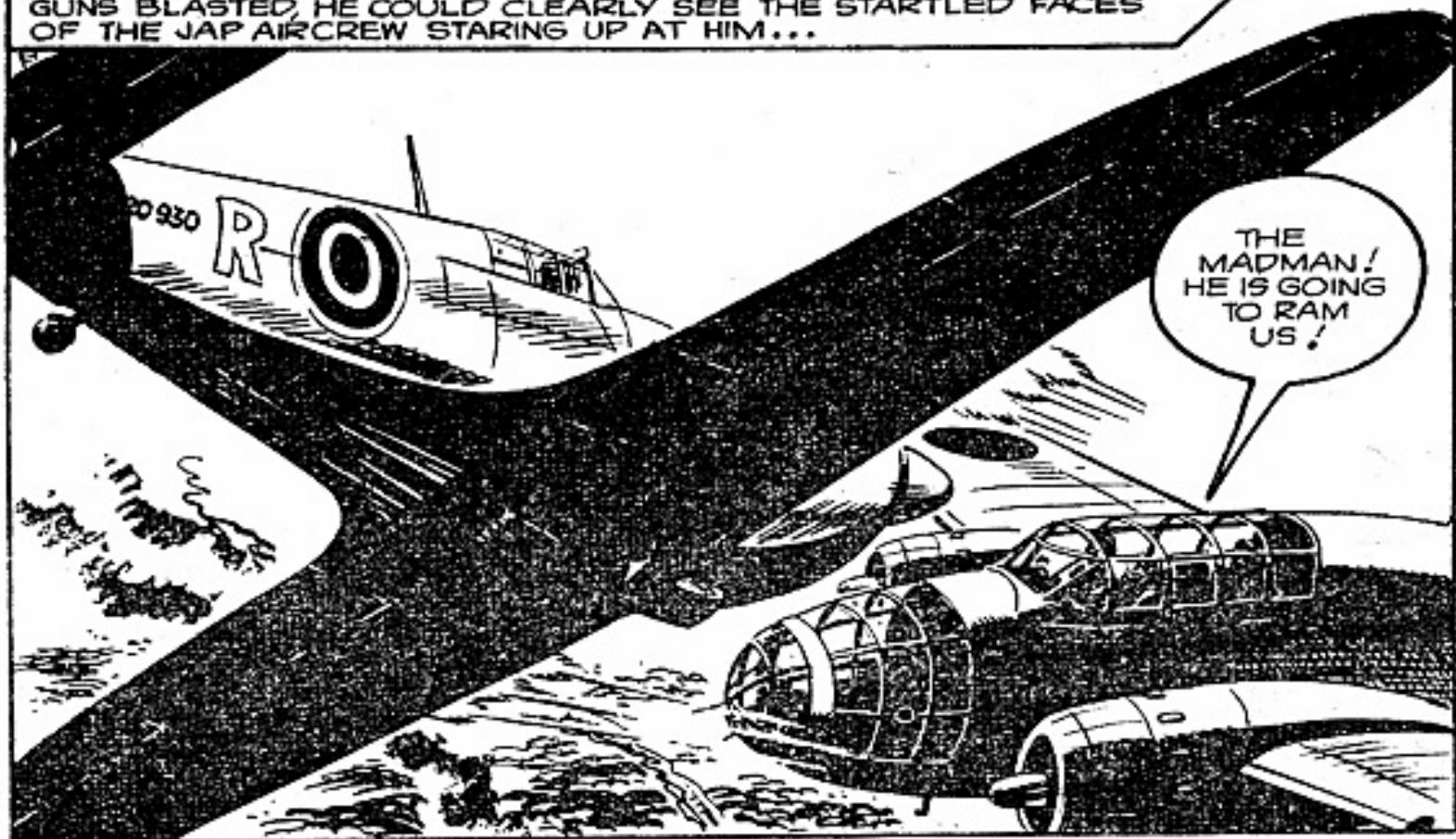
AS THE HURRICANES CLIMBED FROM THEIR TAKE-OFF RUNS, THE ZEROES STRUCK ...



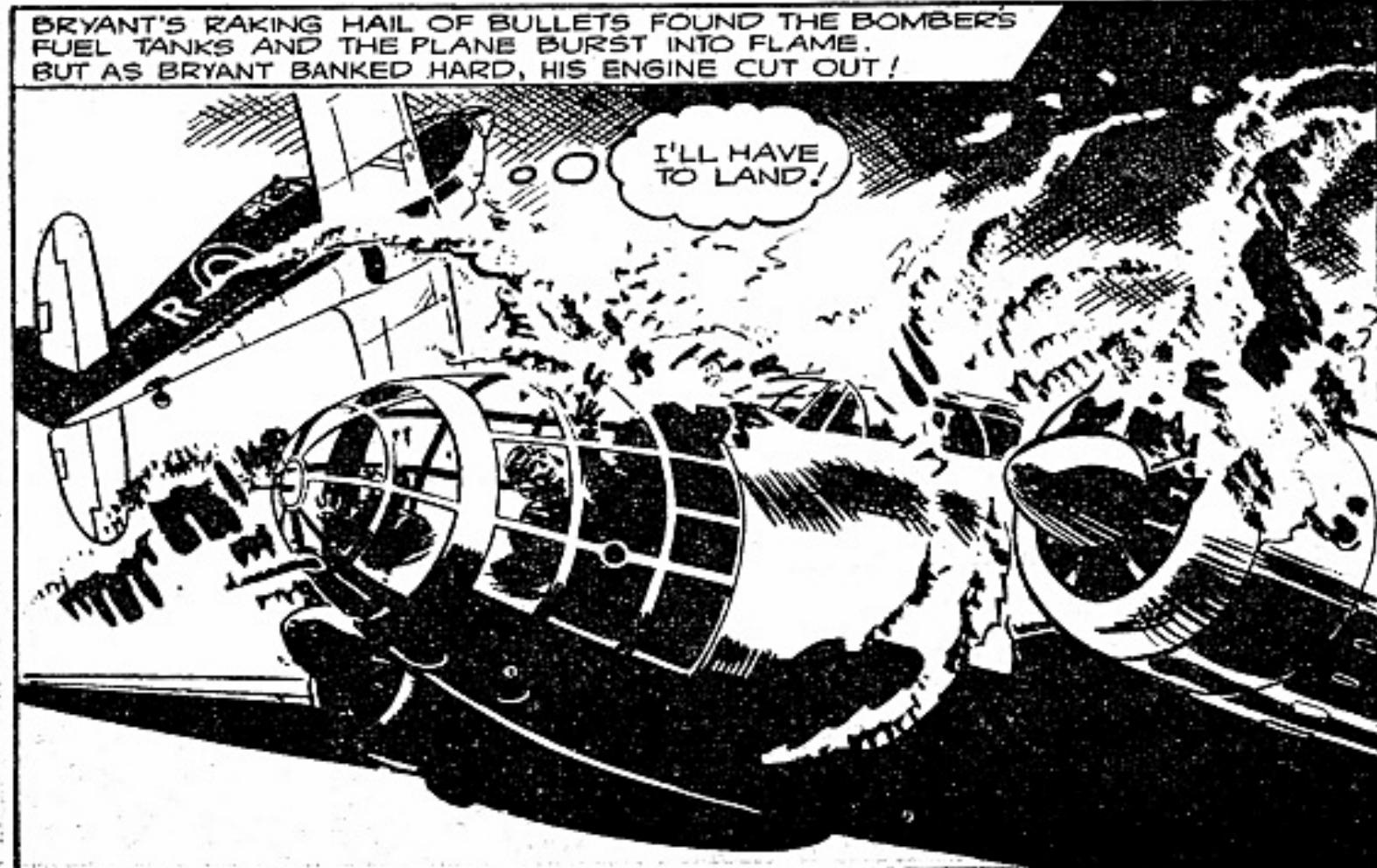
GAMELY, THE HURRICANE PILOTS BATTLED TO REACH THE JAP BOMBERS, BUT IT WAS A HOPELESS TASK IN THE FACE OF THE OVERWHELMING OPPRESSION. BRYANT SAW THE BIG BOMBERS BREAK THROUGH...



AS THE LEADING JAP BOMBER CIRCLED THE AIRFIELD, BRYANT DIVED HIS MACHINE STRAIGHT AT IT. IN THE SPLIT-SECOND BEFORE HIS GUNS BLASTED, HE COULD CLEARLY SEE THE STARTLED FACES OF THE JAP AIRCREW STARING UP AT HIM...



BRYANT'S RAKING HAIL OF BULLETS FOUND THE BOMBER'S FUEL TANKS AND THE PLANE BURST INTO FLAME. BUT AS BRYANT BANKED HARD, HIS ENGINE CUT OUT!



## The Sky's The Limit

HE SEARCHED DESPERATELY FOR A LANDING PLACE AWAY FROM THE GOUTING BOMB BLASTS THAT SHATTERED THE AIRSTRIP. AT LAST HE FOUND A CLEAR SPOT...



THE FURY PASSED... AND THE LAST OF THE BOMBER'S DRONED AWAY AGAIN TO THE NORTH. WHAT WAS LEFT OF MINGALA BASE LAY, SHATTERED AND SMOKING, UNDER THE MOONLIGHT.



STERLING, BRYANT TURNED AWAY. THEN, TWO SHADY FIGURES CAME UP TO HIM ~ THE AMERICAN PILOTS, HOLT AND RAWSON...

THOSE JAPS SURE BEAT US UP, COMMANDER. ARE YOU GOING TO STAY AND FIGHT?

I'LL MAKE THAT DECISION, RAWSON!

DON'T GET HIM WRONG, SIR... RAWSON AND I ARE IN THE SAME BOAT ~ WE'VE NO MONEY. I LOST MINE IN THE PLANE CRASH AND RAWSON PAID HAMES TO BRING HIM IN.

LIKE I SAID BEFORE ~ EVERYBODY MAKES MISTAKES.

WHAT THIS GUY IS TRYING TO SAY, COMMANDER, IS THAT IF YOU'RE STICKING ~ THEN WE'RE WITH YOU...

WELL ~ THANK YOU ! WE MAY BE VERY GLAD OF YOUR SERVICES BEFORE THIS IS OVER !

## Chapter 2. Jap Attack

ANOTHER MAN WHO HAD SURVIVED THE TERRIBLE BOMBING OF MINGALA PULLED HIMSELF FROM SHELTER AS THE BOMBERS FLEW OFF. FOR VINCENT HAMES, THERE WAS ONLY ONE, DESPERATE THOUGHT...



THE JAPS  
WILL BE BACK...  
I'VE GOT TO GET  
AWAY... NOW!

AMIDST THE SETTLING DUST OF THE BOMB-BLASTS, HAMES AND BRYANT CAME FACE TO FACE...

SO YOU'RE STILL ALIVE, BRYANT?

HAMES!



YOUR  
ORDERS KEPT  
EVERYBODY HERE!  
BUT YOU WON'T  
LIVE TO COLLECT  
YOUR MEDALS,  
BRYANT!

I'M WARNING  
YOU, HAMES!



HAMES' PENT-UP FURY  
CRACKED... AND HE  
FLUNG HIMSELF  
HEADLONG AT THE  
WING COMMANDER...

CURSE  
YOU, BRYANT!  
YOU CAN'T  
HOLD US  
HERE ANY  
LONGER!



THE M.O. RACED UP JUST AS A WELL-AIMED  
LEFT KNOCKED HAMES SPRAWLING...

THAT'LL  
QUIETEN YOU,  
HAMES!

WHAT  
THE HECK'S  
GOT INTO THE  
MAN?



54 The Sky's The Limit

RAWSON SUPPLIED THE ANSWER AS HAMES LAY THERE IN THE DUST, HIS EYES FLAMING WITH HATE...

THAT MONEY'S BURNING A HOLE IN HIS POCKET, COMMANDER. HE CAN'T BEAR TO THINK OF THE JAPS TAKING IT AWAY FROM HIM...



BEFORE BRYANT HAD A CHANCE TO WORK OUT HOW TO DEAL WITH THE MAN SPRAWLED BEFORE HIM, THERE WAS ANOTHER INTERRUPTION...

A TRUCK!

WHERE DID IT COME FROM? IT CAN'T BE ONE OF OURS...



THE VEHICLE ROLLED TO A STOP. AN INDIAN SERGEANT CLIMBED FROM THE DRIVING SEAT...



THE SERGEANT SALUTED SMARTLY. HIS NEXT WORDS SENT THE M.O. HURRYING FOR HIS MEDICAL KIT...



SWIFTLY, BRYANT MADE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SURVIVORS OF THE SQUADRON TO PULL OUT AND MAKE A DASH FOR FREEDOM. THEN...

WE HAVEN'T MUCH TIME... THE JAPS WILL BE CLOSING IN ON US RIGHT NOW! LET'S GO!



## The Sky's The Limit

THE BATTERED OLD TRUCK WAS SOON BUMPING THROUGH THE JUNGLE. FOR THE FIRST TIME, BRYANT NOTICED HAMES HAD DISAPPEARED...

I THINK HE CLEARED OUT, COMMANDER. I HOPE HIS LUCK HOLDS OUT AGAINST THE JAPS...



BUT THERE WAS NO TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THE MISSING MAN. WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MINUTES, THEY FOUND THE JAPS WERE NEARER THAN THEY HAD IMAGINED!

THEN I'M NOT RISKING IT! STOP THE TRUCK! RIGHT, MEN - PILE OUT!

WHAT'S THAT UP AHEAD?

THE ROAD IS BLOCKED, SIR... PERHAPS IT IS A TRAP!

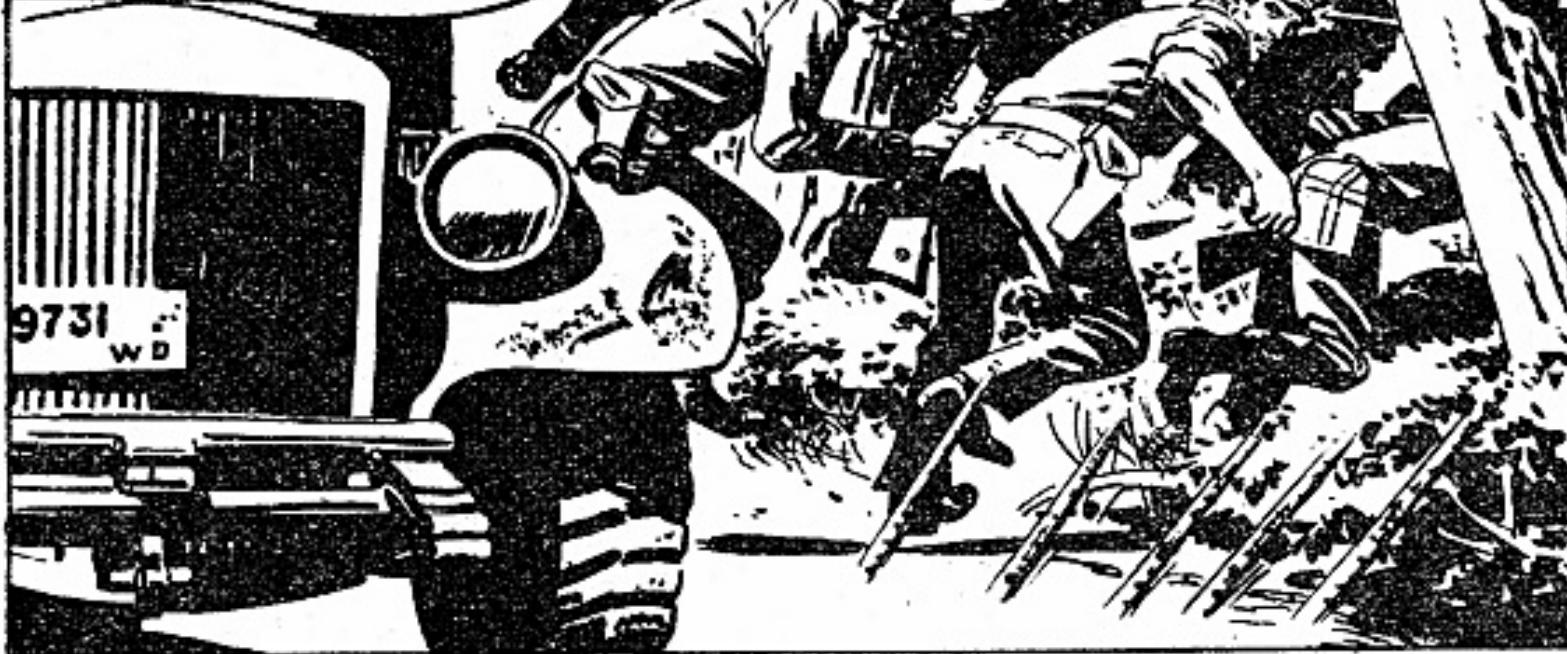


# The Sky's The Limit

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AS THEY DASHED INTO THE COVER OF THE JUNGLE, A HIDDEN MACHINE-GUN OPENED UP! BULLETS STITCHED A LETHAL TRACK ALONG THE DUSTY ROAD FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE FALLEN TREE...

WE'VE GOT TO KNOCK THAT MACHINE-GUN OUT-OR WE WON'T GET THROUGH! TWO OF YOU MEN, FOLLOW ME!



THE INDIAN SERGEANT AND ONE OF THE R.A.F. MEN JOINED BRYANT. SILENTLY, THEY MOVED THROUGH THE JUNGLE COVER UNTIL THE WING-COMMANDER SPOTTED THE MACHINE-GUN NEST...

WE'VE GOT THEM! MAKE IT FAST, WHEN I GIVE THE WORD!



IT WAS THE BRAWNY INDIAN SERGEANT WHO MOVED FIRST, GRAPPLING WITH ONE OF THE JAP GUNNERS BEFORE HE HAD A CHANCE TO RESIST ...

AGH!



BRYANT AND HIS MEN TURNED TO GO BACK TO THE REST OF THEIR PARTY. THERE WAS A SUDDEN MOVEMENT IN THE UNDERGROWTH AND FOUR MORE JAP INFANTRYMEN CAME SCREAMING TOWARDS THEM!

THE MACHINE-GUN! GET IT WORKING!

BANZAI! CUT THEM DOWN!



AS THE INDIAN SERGEANT SWUNG THE JAP MACHINE-GUN ROUND TOWARDS THE NEWCOMERS, BRYANT'S FIRE BROUGHT TWO OF THEM DOWN...



## The Sky's The Limit

THE JAPANESE MACHINE-GUN JAMMED. UNFAMILIAR WITH ITS MECHANISM, THE INDIAN SERGEANT SPRANG TO HIS FEET, GROPING FOR A RIFLE ...

HOPE I'VE GOT ENOUGH ROUNDS LEFT TO STOP 'EM...

WE SHALL DIE FIGHTING, SIR!

FORWARD! FORWARD!



BRYANT'S FIRST SHOT BROUGHT DOWN ONE OF THE ENEMY... BUT, NEXT MOMENT, THE OTHER TWO WERE UPON THEM, LIKE TIGERS.



SEEING HIS CHANCE, THE WING COMMANDER SMASHED HIS FIST AGAINST THE JAP'S JAW. THE SNARL FROZE ON THE ENEMY'S LIPS AS HIS HEAD STRUCK A TREE WITH A SICKENING THUD...



THEN, SWINGING ROUND, BRYANT SAW THE MORTALLY WOUNDED INDIAN SERGEANT MAKE HIS FINAL KILL...



## The Sky's The Limit

THERE WAS NOTHING BRYANT COULD DO FOR THE GALLANT SERGEANT. CREEPING THROUGH THE JUNGLE, HE JOINED THE OTHERS...

THE JAPS HAVE CONTROL OF THE ROAD... WE'LL HAVE TO MOVE ON IN THE JUNGLE...

I'VE GOT A COMPASS IN MY PACK. THAT SHOULD SEE US THROUGH...



WITH THE M.O. CARRYING HIS HEFTY MEDICAL PACK, THEY SET OUT. BRYANT KNEW THEIR CHANCES OF REACHING TOUNGOO AIRFIELD WERE SLIM... BUT THERE WAS NO GOING BACK TO MINGALA...



AS THE WEARY PARTY TRUDGED ON, THE ENEMY TROOPS WERE ALREADY STREAMING SOUTH AFTER THEIR BREAKTHROUGH AT KUNMING. THE FINAL OVERTHROW OF BURMA WAS AT HAND...



AS DUSK CAME TO THE JUNGLE AGAIN,  
WING COMMANDER BRYANT WAS CLOSER TO  
TOUNGOO AIRFIELD THAN HE THOUGHT...

ANOTHER  
PATROL... AND  
WE'RE TOO DEAD  
BEAT TO MOVE.  
WE'LL HAVE TO  
SHOOT IT OUT!



BUT THE MAN WHO CAME THROUGH THE  
SCREEN OF BUSHES WAS NO JAP.  
SEEING HIM, BRYANT STOOD UP SUDDENLY.

IT'S AN INDIAN  
SOLDIER! OVER  
HERE, MAN!



THE INDIAN HAD BEEN SENT OUT FROM  
THE AIRFIELD TO FIND THEM. QUICKLY,  
HE LED THEM ALONG A JUNGLE TRAIL...

LUCKY WE  
SPOTTED YOU  
FIRST... THE  
JAPS ARE  
EVERYWHERE!

MANY JAPS...  
BUT I HAVE  
BEEN SEARCHING  
FOR YOU. WE  
SUSPECTED THE  
TRUCK HAD  
BEEN WAYLAID.



## The Sky's The Limit

IN LESS THAN AN HOUR, THE PARTY REACHED THE HIDDEN AIRFIELD. SWIFTLY, THE M.O. GOT TO WORK.



THE COMMANDING OFFICER WAS A BURLY SOUTH AFRICAN. STRAIGHTWAY, HE SHOWED BRYANT WHAT WAS ON HIS MIND, AS HE SPOKE IN HIS FEVER-WEAKENED VOICE...

THIS FEVER WOULD STRIKE US JUST WHEN WE HAD A CRITICAL ENEMY TARGET PIN-POINTED, BRYANT...

ANYTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT?



THE SOUTH AFRICAN'S FINGER TAPPED THE CHART ON THE FLOOR BESIDE HIM URGENTLY, HIS VOICE WAS STERN...

THERE'S SOMETHING YOU *MUST* DO, BRYANT! ONE OF OUR PILOTS SPOTTED ENEMY CONCENTRATIONS AROUND MAGDEO... ENOUGH JAP AMMUNITION TO BLOW BURMA INTO THE SEA...



YOU WANT US TO RAID IT? OKAY!

BRYANT LISTENED AS THE SICK MAN OUTLINED A PLAN OF ATTACK...

THERE SEEMS TO BE NO FIGHTER COVER NEAR MAGDEO. ONE BLENHEIM COULD GET THROUGH THEIR FLAK DEFENCES, AT NIGHT, IF THE TARGET COULD BE PINPOINTED...

I COULD FLY ONE OF THE LYSANDERS AS PATHFINDER

WHEN HE FINALLY LEFT THE C.O.'S TENT, BRYANT'S MIND WAS MADE UP. HE HAD A TASK AHEAD - TO PERSUADE TWO MORE MEN TO COME WITH HIM...

I THINK I CAN RAISE A CREW FOR THE BLENHEIM...

YOU'LL HAVE TO WORK FAST, BRYANT. WE EXPECT THE JAPS AT ANY TIME...



## The Sky's The Limit

ONCE OUTSIDE, BRYANT SOUGHT OUT HOLT AND RAWSON. HE QUICKLY EXPLAINED WHAT HE WANTED...

YOU TOLD ME YOU'D HELP ME IF YOU COULD...

SURE THING! HANK AND MYSELF WERE LOOKING OVER THESE BABIES. I RECKON WE COULD HANDLE ONE.



ONE OF THE BLENHEIMS WAS ALREADY BOMBED UP... IT ONLY REMAINED FOR BRYANT TO TAKE OVER THE LYSAENDER HE WOULD FLY IN AS PATHFINDER.

THE CHANCES ARE THE JAPS WILL HAVE PLENTY OF FLAK COVER NEAR THE TARGET. BUT IF I GET IN FIRST AND GIVE YOU A GOOD PINPOINT.

IT'LL BE A CINCH! ONE HIT ON THAT AMMO DUMP WILL DO THE TRICK!



THE MEDICAL OFFICER CAME TO SEE BRYANT OFF...

GOOD LUCK, SIR!  
I'LL BE STOPPING HERE TO TAKE CARE OF THOSE WITH FEVER.

MAYBE YOU'LL NEED AS MUCH LUCK AS I WILL, DOC!



AND SO, TWO BRAVE MEN PARTED - FOR THE LAST TIME. BRYANT GUNNED THE MOTOR OF THE LYSANDER...

BRYANT ALWAYS SEEMED TO BE HAUNTED BY SOMETHING IN HIS PAST. I HOPE HE FINDS THE ANSWER TO IT OUT THERE.



# Chapter 3. The Price of Honour

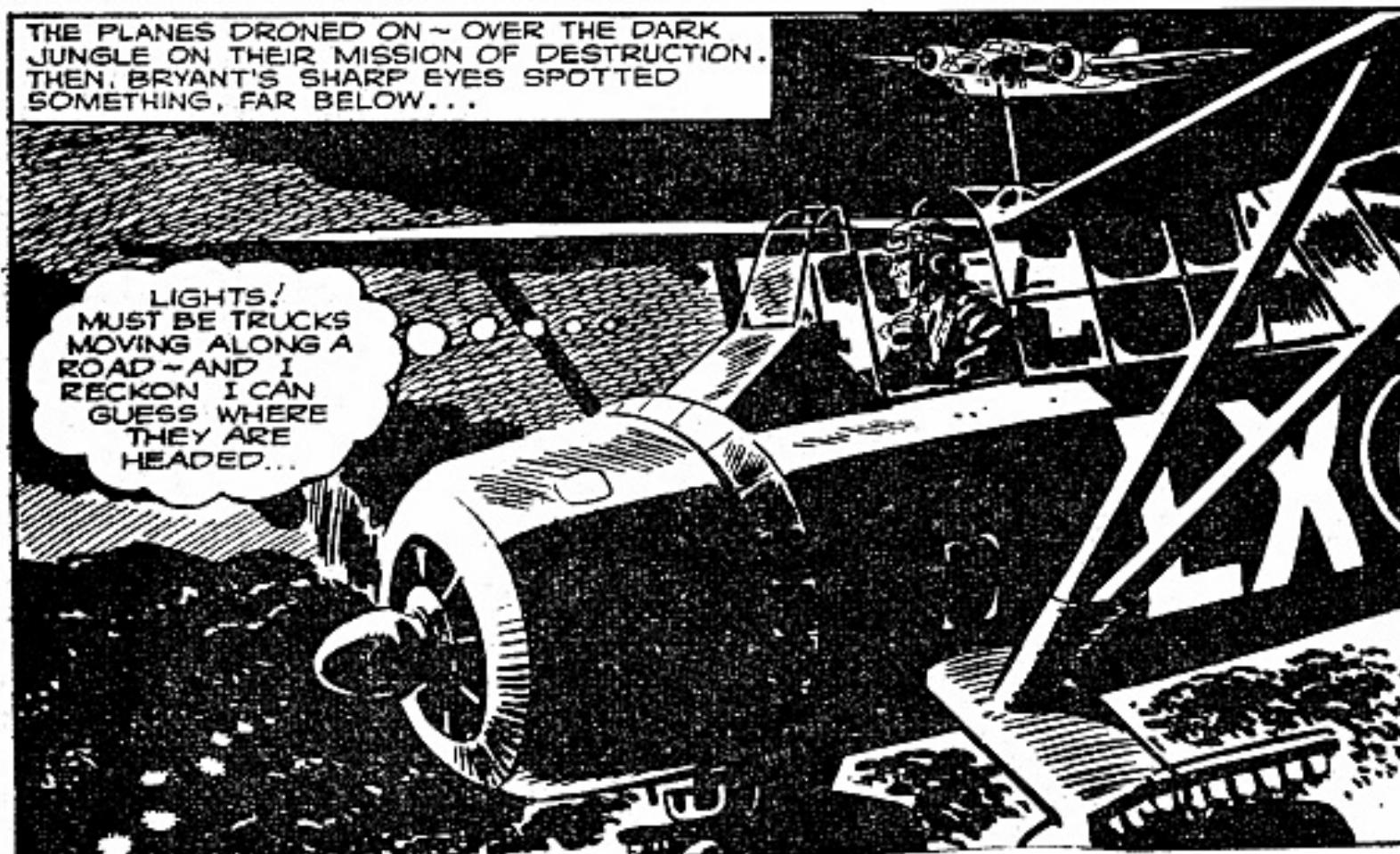
AIRBORNE, BRYANT TURNED THE OLD LYSANDER ON COURSE.

I'M GOING TO NEED  
MY NIGHT FIGHTER  
EYESIGHT TONIGHT...  
IF WE'RE TO PULL  
THIS OFF!



THE PLANES DRONED ON ~ OVER THE DARK JUNGLE ON THEIR MISSION OF DESTRUCTION. THEN, BRYANT'S SHARP EYES SPOTTED SOMETHING, FAR BELOW...

LIGHTS!  
MUST BE TRUCKS  
MOVING ALONG A  
ROAD - AND I  
RECKON I CAN  
GUESS WHERE  
THEY ARE  
HEADED...



SUDDENLY HIS PLANE WAS BATHED IN DAZZLING LIGHT. A JAP ANTI-AIRCRAFT BATTERY HAD PICKED HIM UP...

ENEMY PLANE! OPEN FIRE!



THE SLOW-MOVING LYSANDER WAS CAUGHT IN A BOX BARRAGE! BRYANT STRUGGLED TO HOLD THE BUFFETED PLANE ON COURSE ...

I'VE GOT TO CLIMB - GET ABOVE THE BARRAGE!



## The Sky's The Limit

EVEN AS HE FOUGHT FOR HEIGHT, ANOTHER SEARCHLIGHT FLICKED ON ITS ROVING BEAM FASTENED ON TO THE TINY PLANE . . .

THE NIPS HAVE FIXED HIM IN THAT SEARCHLIGHT, RAWSON! HE DOESN'T HAVE A CHANCE!

HE DOES  
IF YOU CAN WORK  
THE FRONT GUNS,  
HOLT! I'M GOING  
THROUGH THAT  
CRAZY LIGHT!

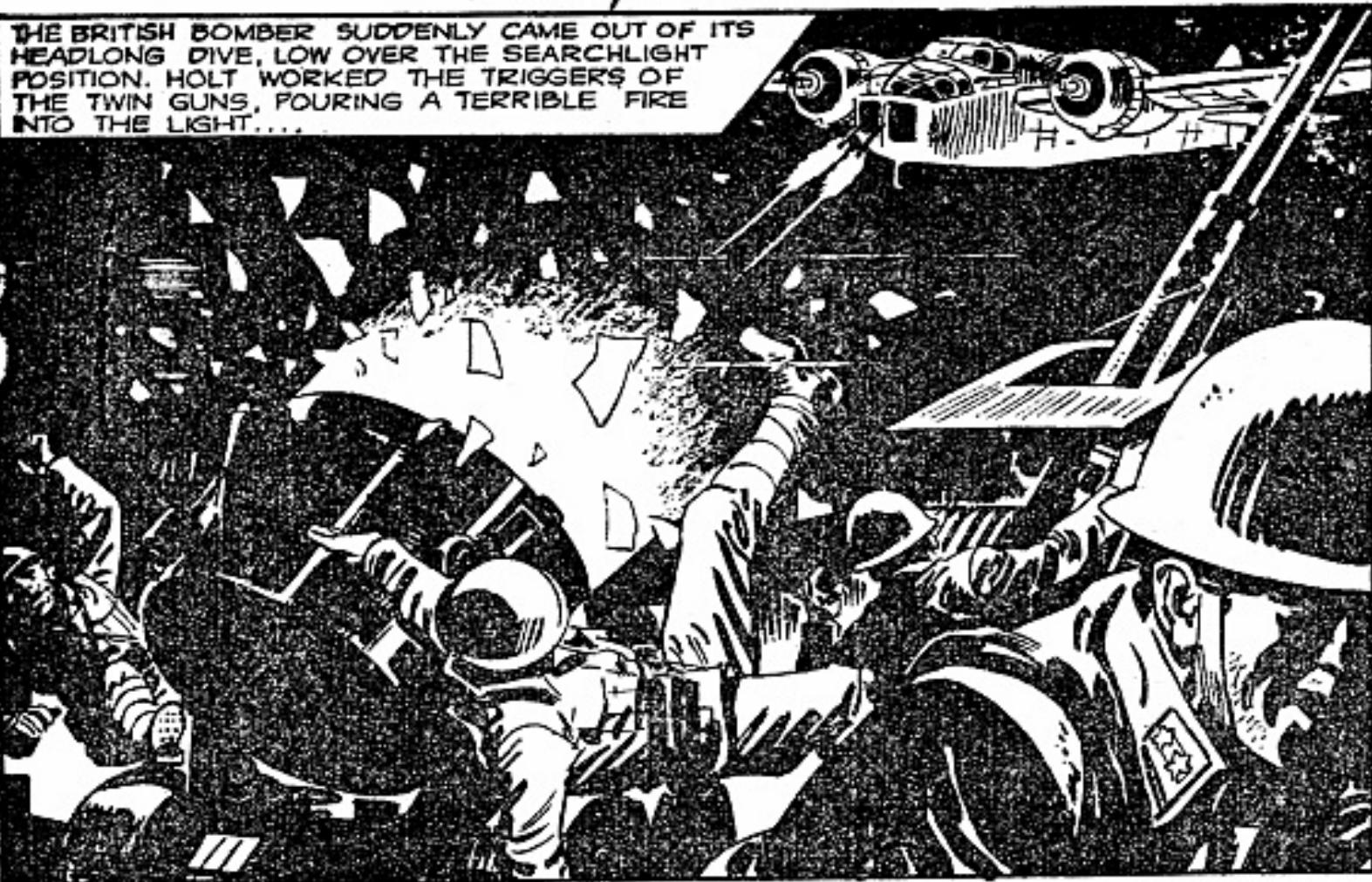
AS RAWSON PUT THE BLENHEIM INTO A STEEP DIVE,  
STRAIGHT FOR THE SEARCHLIGHT BATTERY, HOLT  
HAD ALREADY SCRAMBLED INTO THE GUN TURRET.

STAY WITH  
IT, HOLT! I'M  
GOING TO  
PULL OUT!

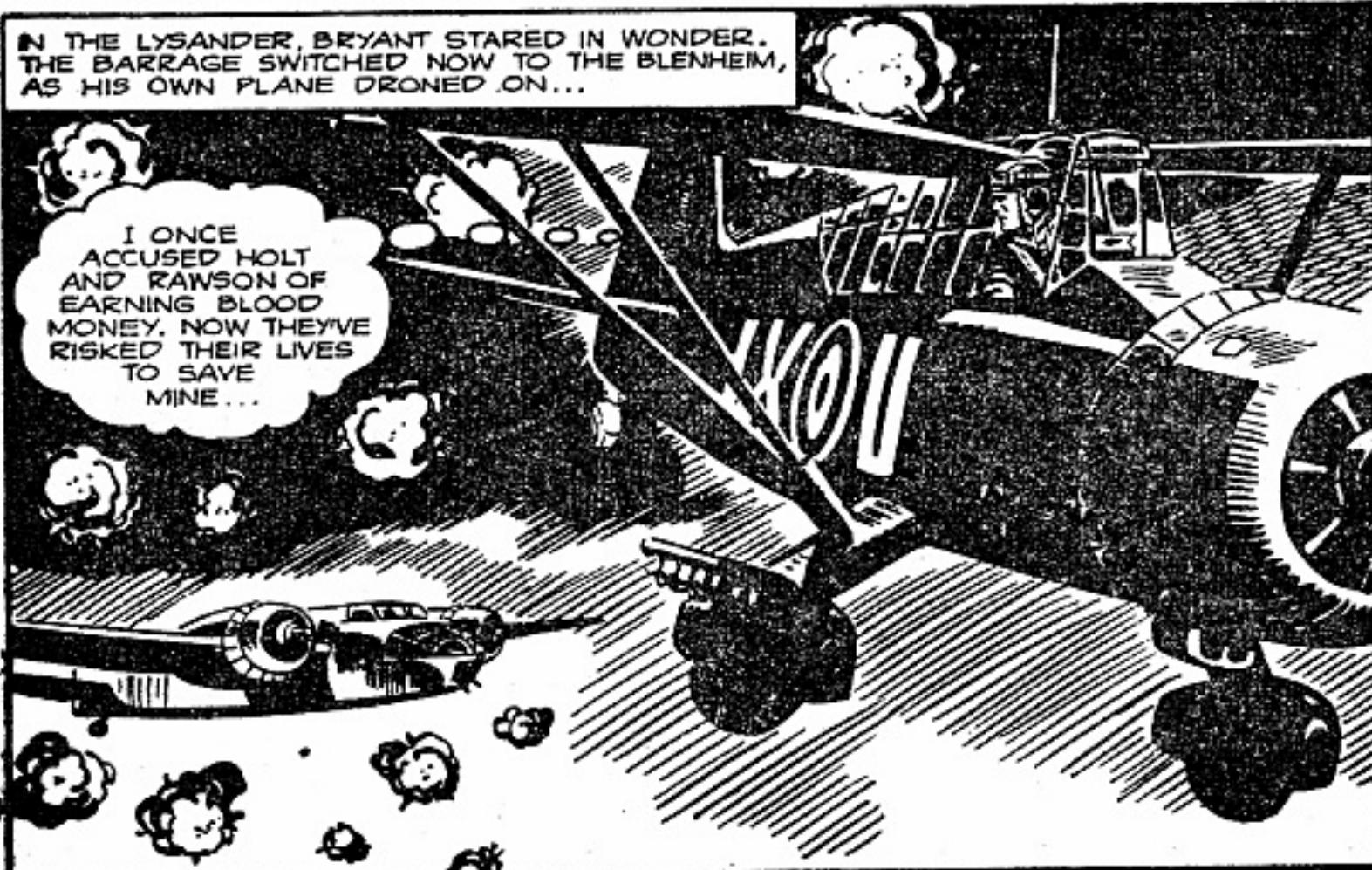
# The Sky's The Limit

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THE BRITISH BOMBER SUDDENLY CAME OUT OF ITS HEADLONG DIVE, LOW OVER THE SEARCHLIGHT POSITION. HOLT WORKED THE TRIGGERS OF THE TWIN GUNS, POURING A TERRIBLE FIRE INTO THE LIGHT...



IN THE LYSANDER, BRYANT STARED IN WONDER. THE BARRAGE SWITCHED NOW TO THE BLENHEIM, AS HIS OWN PLANE DRONED ON...



## The Sky's The Limit

BRYANT REALISED THAT THEY WERE ALMOST OVER THE TARGET AREA AS THE FLAK GREW STEADILY MORE INTENSE...



ACTING ON THE INSTINCT BORNE OF HIS NIGHT FIGHTER DAYS, BRYANT KNEW THIS MUST BE THE TARGET BELOW HIM. NEXT INSTANT, THE FLARES WERE GONE!



NEXT SECOND, THE BLENHEIM ROARED IN AND DROPPED ITS BOMB-LOAD. WITH AN EXPLOSION WHICH SHOOK THE EARTH FOR MILES AROUND, THE AMMUNITION DUMP BLEW UP!



BUFFETED BY THE BLAST OF THE TITANIC EXPLOSION, THE TWO AIRCRAFT FOUND IT A STRUGGLE TO KEEP ON AN EVEN KEEL ...

BANG ON TARGET, HOLT! LOOK AT THAT FIRE ~ IT'S BIG ENOUGH TO BE SEEN CLEAR TO TOKYO!

THANKS TO OUR PATHFINDER!

NOW WE'VE GOT TO GET AWAY BEFORE THE HORNETS ARRIVE...



BUT RETALIATION CAME SOONER THAN THEY HAD EXPECTED ...

WE'VE GOT COMPANY -  
A BUNCH OF ZEROIES,  
RAWSON!

GET IN  
THE TURRET,  
HOLT / HIT  
THEM WITH  
ALL YOU'VE  
GOT!

THE JAP FIGHTERS CLOSED ON THE LUMBERING  
BRITISH PLANES... THERE WAS A SPLUTTER OF  
FLAME FROM THE BLENHEIM'S PORT ENGINE...

WE'RE  
HIT!

AS THE STRICKEN BOMBER WENT INTO A DEATH DIVE, THE JAP FIGHTERS TURNED IN A WIDE ARC. ONE OF THEM PEELED OFF AND SPED TOWARDS THE SURVIVING BRITISH PLANE . . .

A SPOTTER PLANE! IT WILL BE A PERFECT TARGET FOR MY GUNS!

IF I CAN DODGE THE FIRST BURST I MIGHT BE ABLE TO CRASH-LAND!

THE ZERO'S FIRST BURST RIPPED ALONG THE WING OF THE LYSANDER! BRYANT HELD THE PLANE TILL HE WAS SKIMMING ALONG AT TREE-TOP HEIGHT . . .

I'LL HIT THE GROUND AT ANY MOMENT. GOT TO BRING MY SPEED DOWN!

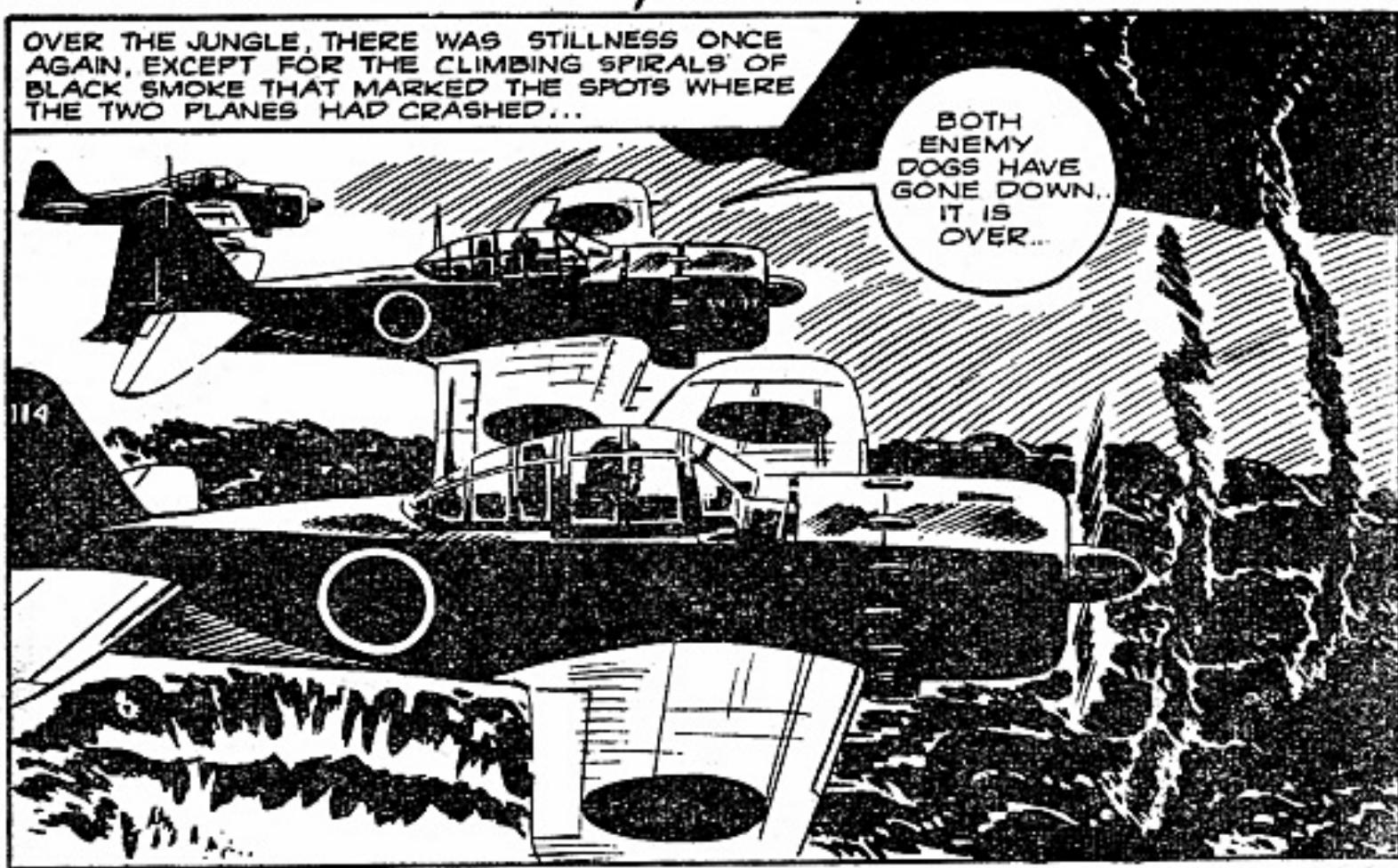
## The Sky's The Limit

BUT AS BRYANT THROTTLED BACK, THE TERRIFIC DRAG ON THE SHATTERED WINGS CAUSED THEM TO BREAK UP...



SHE'S  
CRACKING UP!  
I CAN'T HOLD  
HER! I CAN'T  
CONTROL  
HER...

OVER THE JUNGLE, THERE WAS STILLNESS ONCE AGAIN, EXCEPT FOR THE CLIMBING SPIRALS OF BLACK SMOKE THAT MARKED THE SPOTS WHERE THE TWO PLANES HAD CRASHED...



BUT, DEEP IN THE JUNGLE, A MAN WAS CRAWLING FREE FROM THE WRECK OF A LYSANDER...



58 The Sky's The Limit

GRADUALLY, BRYANT'S BRAIN CLEARED. HE HAULED HIMSELF UPRIGHT AND STARTED TO REMEMBER AS HE GAZED BACK AT THE SMOULDERING WRECK OF THE LYSANDER.

THE PLANE... THOSE FIGHTERS... I REMEMBER THE FIRE...

HOLT AND RAWSON... THEY'RE DEAD! THEY DIED, LIKE JOHNNY LEVIS DIED... LIKE YOU ALMOST DIED...

THE IMAGINATION OF THE SHOCKED MAN WAS PLAYING TRICKS ON HIM! HE TURNED WILDLY, BLINDLY, INTO THE JUNGLE, AS VOICES SEEMED TO CALL OUT TO HIM FROM THE UNDERGROWTH.

THOSE VOICES! I CAN'T STAND IT!

RAWSON DEAD... HOLT DEAD... LIKE JOHNNY DIED... AND LIKE YOU'RE GOING TO DIE, BRYANT...

THEN, QUITE CLEARLY, HE  
SAW A MAN'S FACE!

IT'S HAMES!  
NO! NO ~ IT  
CAN'T BE!



MERCIFULLY, BRYANT BLACKED OUT.  
THEN, THROUGH THE GROPING MISTS,  
HE GRADUALLY CAME ROUND...

TAKE IT  
EASY, BRYANT!  
YOU'VE HAD A  
NASTY BANG  
ON THE  
HEAD.

HAMES!  
WHAT ARE  
YOU DOING  
HERE?



## The Sky's The Limit

HAMES EXPLAINED WHAT HAD BROUGHT HIM TO THE JUNGLE...

I WAS HEADING FOR RANGOON, BUT GOT LOST IN THE JUNGLE. I SAW THE EXPLOSION OF THE AMMO DUMP WHEN YOU DROPPED THOSE BOMBS.

WHAT MADE YOU STOP, HAMES?



HAMES SPOKE TENSELY, DETERMINED THAT BRYANT SHOULD BELIEVE HIM...

I BEGAN TO THINK ABOUT THINGS, BRYANT! HOW MEN WERE DYING WHILE I WAS RUNNING TO SAVE MY OWN SKIN, AND THE MONEY I HAD...





RYANT LISTENED IN SILENCE...

THAT NEW JAGUAR FIGHTER WAS A KILLER, RYANT! I SHOULD KNOW... I WAS THE FIRST TEST PILOT TO FLY IT. MY PLANE CRASHED AND MY CO-PILOT WAS KILLED. I WAS BLAMED AND CASHIERED FOR NEGLIGENCE... BUT IT WAS THE OIL PRESSURE FEED THAT WAS FAULTY...

OIL PRESSURE FEED! THAT WAS HOW IT HAPPENED WITH ME-AND JOHNNY!

HAMES WENT INTO GREATER DETAIL... BUT FOR RYANT, THE QUESTIONS WERE ALREADY ANSWERED. THE MACHINE, NOT THE MEN, HAD FAILED!

YOU DIDN'T KILL JOHNNY LEVIS. HIS MURDERER WAS A BRUTAL FIGHTER PLANE THAT SHOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN FLOWN!

AND YOU SHOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN CASHIERED, HAMES...

VINCENT HAMES PULLED THE MONEY FROM HIS POCKETS... THE DOLLARS HE HAD BEEN PAID AS A FLYING TIGER PILOT...

YOU KNOW, HONOUR IS A STRANGE WORD, BRYANT. SOUNDS A LITTLE OUTDATED NOWADAYS. BUT PERHAPS I'M BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND IT A LITTLE BETTER. I SHAN'T NEED THESE DOLLARS TO BUY IT, ANYWAY...



THE DAWN WAS RISING ~  
AND WITH THE DAWN  
CAME THE JAP PATROLS...

BANZAI!  
WHITE DOGS!  
ATTACK!



TOGETHER, THEY FACED THE ENEMY - THE TWO MEN WHO FOR SO LONG HAD BEEN FIGHTING THE BATTLES THAT RAGED WITHIN THEMSELVES. THEY WERE OUTNUMBERED, BUT THEY HAD A FIGHTING CHANCE...AND AS HAMES HAD SAID, HONOUR WAS A WORD THAT ONCE AGAIN MEANT SOMETHING TO HIM...



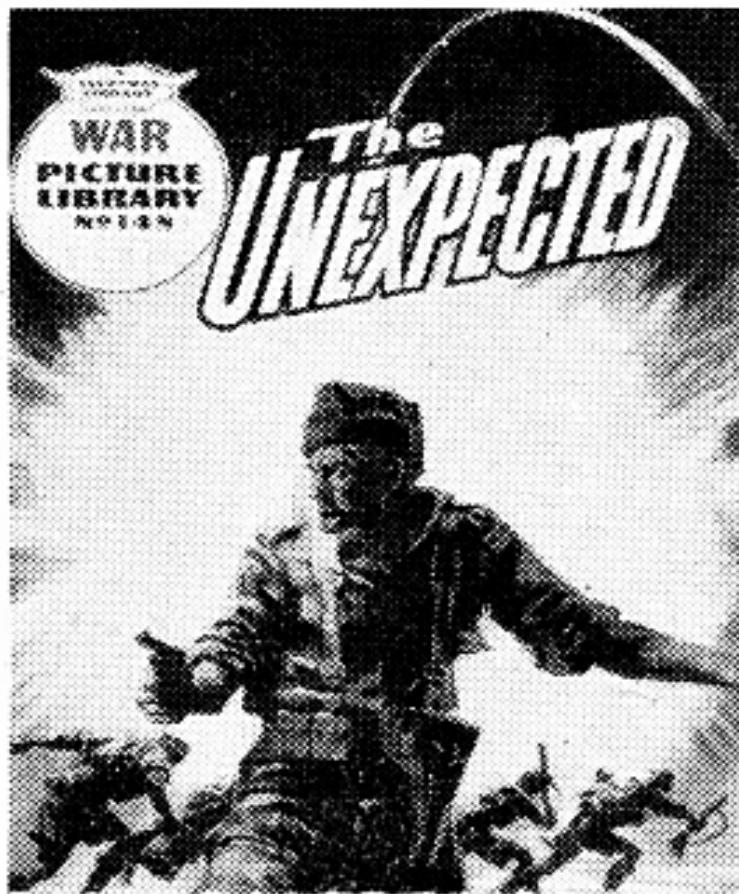
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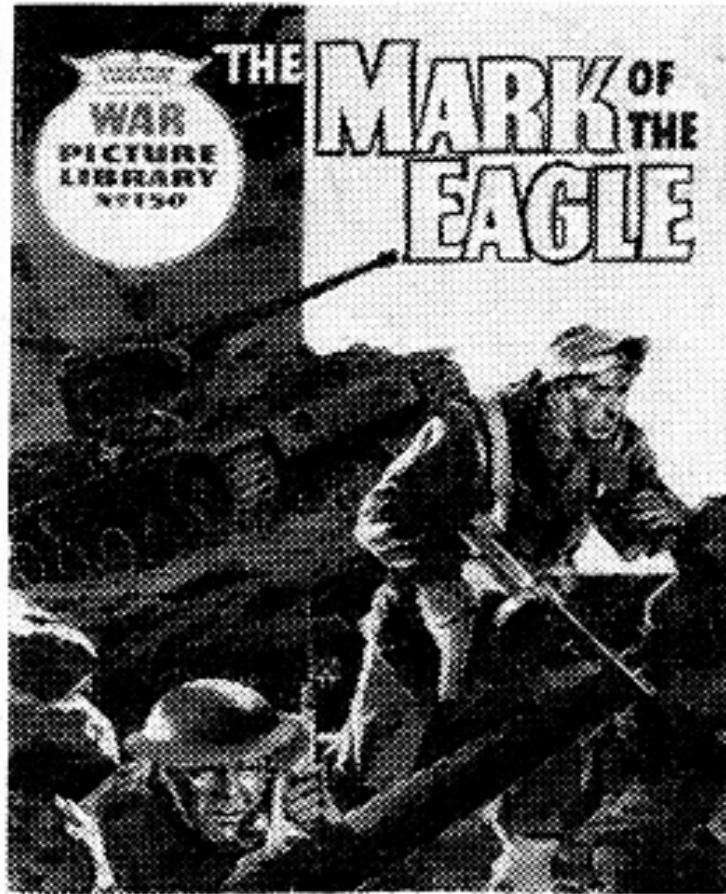
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